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The Tragedy of Tolstoy

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Edited by Aylmer Maude

Translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude

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The Tragedy of **TOLSTOY**

By

Countess Alexandra Tolstoy

Translated by Elena Varnec

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Preface

FTER my articles (of which this book is in part a translation) were published in Paris in the Russian magazines *Sovremennye Zapiski* and *Poslednyie Novosti*,¹ a number of critical articles appeared in the *émigré* press. Some of them were favorable, others censured me for discussing the relations between my parents. I think that the latter were right. I did not want to publish the articles. I was obliged to do it, and I could not possibly avoid speaking about the events that took place in our family. The reason why I had to write everything quite frankly was that the diaries of my mother had been published.

During her life she was always afraid that people would accuse her of having been a bad wife, of not participating in father's ideas, of making his life bitter. Trying to justify herself, she involuntarily made accusations against father. Thus the diary, without being, I am sorry to say, thoroughly reliable, has caused the publication of a number of books and articles unfavorable to him. I felt that it was my duty to tell people what I knew, for I was the only one who stayed with my parents during the last years. If I died, nobody could tell the story. Father himself did not say much about his family life, and my mother carefully scratched out of his diaries everything he wrote about her.

The well-known translator of father's works and friend of our family, Aylmer Maude, wrote to me:

"I am glad your book will be published in America. Since your mother's *Diary* was published, many reviewers and writers, basing themselves on statements in it, have written in a very denunciatory manner about your father. The fact that he was so scrupulously careful not to speak harshly about your mother renders the available evidence one-sided and many readers are misled! It is therefore very desirable that you, who were the nearest witness of their last years together, should tell the facts of the case even more explicitly, if possible, than you have done in your articles published in Paris."

It was, I think, a mistake to publish mother's diaries. It sometimes occurs to me that if she were alive she would never have done it. I

1. *Annales contemporaines* and *Dernières nouvelles*.

often heard her say that she was going to leave a will to the effect that the diaries should not be published until fifty years after her death.

There was a great change in mother after father died. She suddenly became a mild, gentle old woman. She sat for hours, dozing in a big armchair, and woke up only when someone mentioned father's name. She would sigh and begin speaking about how sorry she was for having made him suffer. "I really think I was insane," she said.

After the Revolution, she lost everything, but she never complained. She seemed strangely indifferent to money, luxury, things she liked so much before. She died in 1919 of inflammation of the lungs. My sister Tania and I took care of her for eleven days. She suffered but was very patient and kind to everybody. When she understood that she was dying, she called my sister and me. "I want to tell you," she said, breathing heavily, and interrupted by spasms of coughing, "I know that I was the cause of your father's death. I repented deeply. But I loved him all my life long and I was always a faithful wife to him."

My sister and I could not speak. We were both crying. We knew that mother was telling us the truth.

ALEXANDRA TOLSTOY.

*Newtown Square, Pennsylvania,
January 13, 1933.*

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Rules for Pronunciation of Russian Names

The Library of Congress system of transliteration, with slight changes, has been followed in this volume.

ya has been used for initial *ia*: *Yasnaja Poliana*

ye after vowels for *ie*: *Dostoyevsky*

yu for initial *iu*

-i and (after *k*) *-y* for final *-ii*: *Vasili, Makovitsky*

-oy for (final) *-oi*: *Tolstoy*

a = *a* in *father*

e = *e* in *end*, with the exception of the initial *e* which is usually pronounced as *ye*:

Elena is pronounced *Yelena*

i = *i* in *machine* (the French *i*)

ia = *ya* in *yard*

iu = *u* in *use*

kh = German *ch* as in *ich, ach*

o = *o* in *lord*, with the exception of the initial *o* which is usually more like *o* in *odd*

u = *oo* in *spoon* (the French *ou*)

y (after consonants) similar to *i* in *quill*, with the exception of the final *y*, which (after *k*) is pronounced as in *key*

final *-y* after *a* = *oy* in *boy*

ya = *ya* in *yard*

ye = *ye* in *yet*

zh = *g* in *cortège*

There are no general rules for accent.

Note

There are three kinds of names used by the Russians:

Given (Christian) (there is no middle name in Russian)	Patronymic (derived from the father's Christian name)	Family
<i>Lev</i>	<i>Nikolayevich</i>	<i>Tolstoy</i>
<i>Anton</i>	<i>Pavlovich</i>	<i>Chekhov</i>
<i>Sofia</i>	<i>Vladimirovna</i>	<i>Panina</i>
(Final <i>-vich</i> is masculine; final <i>-vna</i> is feminine.)		

In addressing a person, both the given name and the patronymic are used (*Lev Nikolayevich, Anton Pavlovich, Sofia Vladimirovna*), unless this person is a relative or close friend, in which case the first (given) name is used, sometimes in the diminutive form.

Liova, Liouchka are used as diminutives for *Lev*; *Masha, Mashenka*, for *Maria* (Mary), etc.

The peasants sometimes use only the patronymic in addressing a person.

In referring to a third person, all three names may be used, or the first and the third, or the third alone, or (when referring to a relative or friend) the first alone.

The Tragedy of Tolstoy

CHAPTER I

FIRST MEMORIES OF YASNAIA POLIANA

WE are playing lotto. Father enters, his hands behind his leather belt, and looks at us smiling. I feel a great desire to make him like me.

I cannot read yet, but know by heart the inscriptions under all the pictures in my book and pretend to read aloud—"The spruce is always green," and "The June bug is brown"—at the same time looking sideways to see what impression it makes on him. He is laughing.

Everything that surrounded father seemed especially important: his study with the vaulted ceiling into which big rings were screwed;¹ the desk, the big, old-fashioned armchair—so long that one could stretch out in it as if in a bed; and the peculiar smell, perhaps of leather and perhaps of old paper, which emanated from all his things. It could not possibly occur to me to take a pencil away from his desk, or to draw a smiling or a melancholy pig on one of the scraps of paper that littered it.

What a joyous event it was when father played with us! All of a sudden, after dinner, he would call, "Little ones, come along!" We excitedly run and skip after him to his study. In the corner, near grandfather's old-fashioned red washstand, stands a laundry basket. Father throws some rags out of it. "Get in! Who's first?" Vanichka goes in first, because he is the younger. The lid is closed and the basket is carried by father with the help of one of the family or a house guest. Usually this is the task of Alexander Nikiforovich Dunayev—Nikiforych as we call him—a friend of the family who is very fond of Vanichka and me. Vanichka in the laundry basket is being carried all over the house, I am running after. Finally the basket is deposited in some unusual place—under the table or on the dresser or in some dark corner. "Vanichka, now guess where you are!" But Vanichka cannot guess, he is too little for that; he only likes to have a ride.

Then comes my turn. I pack myself into the basket with difficulty,

1. It was said that, in the days when Prince N. S. Volkonsky owned the house, this had been a storeroom and hams were hung on those rings in the ceiling.

with feet folded under. I feel awkward, suffocated, and a little scared. The basket sways softly and evenly; because it is being tilted a little, I believe that we are going downstairs. I am trying with all my might to guess the direction. The basket swings upward, there is a jolt, my head knocks against its side, and father's voice says loudly, "Well, now, guess where you are."

"In the maid's room!" I shout.

"No, you haven't guessed."

I crawl out, stand up, and look around. What is this? For a moment it seems to me that I am in a strange place. It is half dark, there is a window and it is grated. "Papa's study!" I shout at the top of my lungs, opening the curtains which they have drawn on purpose. Niki-forych lifts me up and lets me down to the floor. "Well, little ones, that will do for today," father says. We do not pester him for more, as we would nurse or mother, but run back to our room overjoyed.

When father leaves his study a little early for dinner, he likes to play with us. He carries us in his arms, makes us turn somersaults, and bears us on his shoulders.

Presently the whole family is assembled in the dining-room; only mother is missing. The soup and the soup pastry are getting cold, but no one sits down; we wait for the lady of the house. Then we hear mother's voice and the rustling of her silk skirts. "One, two, three, quick—all under the table!" father commands. In the twinkling of an eye, sisters, brothers, guests, the English governess, all are under the table. We sit there and silently choke with laughter so that it hurts in the pit of the stomach. "But where is everybody?" mother inquires, looking wonderingly around the empty room with her short-sighted eyes. "I cannot tell, Your Excellency," the waiter answers, and suddenly, turning his face away and covering his mouth with his white-gloved hand, he snorts. Uproarious laughter echoes from under the table, and we all emerge. "You always invent some foolishness, Liovochka," says mother, and shakes with laughter.

Another time, father pulled the rug from under the round table in the drawing-room, had us sit down on it, took up one end of it, and gave us a ride around the table. The rug glided along like a sled, and we rode rapturously on it. But the game soon ended. Mother came, saw the drawing-room in disorder and her favorite rug being maltreated, scolded father, had the rug put back in its place, and forbade our touching it.

I remember father's walking ahead, while we, our hands joined in

a chain, follow him on tiptoe, holding our breath. He leads us through the darkest rooms and staircases, visiting every dark corner. "Quiet, quiet," father whispers, "HE'll hear us!" We are half dead with fright. This imagined "HE" may pounce upon us any moment and seize us. Silently, not daring to breathe, with noiseless steps, we steal ahead. "Sh-sh-sh!" we hiss at each other. "Quiet, sh-sh-sh!" "Here HE is!" father cries out suddenly. Shrieking madly, we run out of the room. Father runs ahead of us all.

I remember dimly how, in 1889, the *Fruits of Enlightenment* (*Plody Prosveshcheniye*) was staged at Yasnaia Poliana² by our family and friends. In the dining-room, on the righthand side of the entrance, a stage was arranged. It was dark. Chairs were placed in rows. There was a big crowd. I sat in the front row with nurse. I was very little and understood nothing. People walked and talked upon the stage; everybody laughed, even father himself. I laughed too, until nurse wanted to take me away and put me to bed. I saw my brothers' tutor run across the stage, and the glasses clinked on the tray he carried—it looked as if he were going to drop them. It was rather dark on the stage, but in one corner, behind the sofa, I noticed my sister Tania. I wanted to shout to her, but nurse told me that one was supposed to sit still here, and Tania smiled at me cheerfully. At that moment I was taken away to bed.

All my brothers and sisters were gathered in the Yasnaia Poliana dining-room. Something important and solemn was going on. All were excited, acted unnaturally and talked about dividing things. Father was discontented with something. Mother was angry because Masha refused to take her share of the property. Vanichka and I drew lots to settle what should go to each one. This was fun.

It was a bright, warm day. The air was clear and transparent. All sounds—the chirping of birds, the strokes of the ax in the woods, voices, the noise and whistles of the railway engine—were unusually clear and sharp as though made of glass. The forest was green; only maple leaves showed red here and there. Father and I walked along the gully in the Cherta forest, stepping upon short, fluffy, dark grass such as there is only in autumn. To the right and left were stretches of woodland with cut timber. We came out into the "Burned Clearing" with its centenarian oaks, and turned sharply to the left, to the Hvadiushkin knoll. Here, several years before, the timber had been

2. Our country home, about one hundred and thirty miles south of Moscow.

cut, and a large tract was overgrown with hazelnut bushes. That summer the hazelnuts were "spilling," as people said in our locality—I never saw so many in my life. I would bend down a twig, and find clusters of five or six, and sometimes more. Ripe and yellow, they fell to the ground at the slightest touch. Picking the nuts, I could not see father behind the bushes. I was frightened.

"Au-u, papa, where are you?"

"Hop, hop, hop," he replied, "I'm here; come, there are lots here!"

I was reluctant to leave that bush, there were so many on it; and such greed took possession of me that I wanted to take home all the nuts there were. I grabbed the biggest clusters and ran to him—and there he was with just as many more.

Suddenly there was a shout, and an angry voice said, "What are you doing here, eh? Wait till I get you!" The branches were pushed apart and a guard emerged from the thicket. "Oh, it's you, Your Excellency!" He spoke in an entirely different tone. It came out that small lots of this land with the hazelnuts were leased by the government foresters to tradesmen, who hired guards. Naturally, in spite of that, village women and youngsters sneaked in and gathered nuts, although the guards chased them and took their booty away; sometimes the trespassers themselves abandoned it for fear of being caught red-handed.

Father talked with the guard, paid him for the nuts, and we continued to pick them. We gathered a whole sackful, stripped off the husks, and filled the sack again. Now there was no room to put in any more. The sack was tied, father loaded it on his back, and we started for home. We were just emerging from the woods when father stumbled against something. "Look," he said, "a whole sackful of nuts! Probably someone has dropped it for fear of being caught. The sack is dirty and moist; it must have been here several days." Father picked up the sack, which must have weighed some thirty pounds. He tied it to our own sack and loaded both on one shoulder. It was getting dark, and we were still about six versts³ from the house. I saw father change his load from one shoulder to the other; he was tired. "Wait," he said to me, "take my cane, push the sack up from behind." The cane had a rubber tip; I pushed the sack up; the rubber slipped off. Father hurried; I barely managed to keep pace with him—not walking but trotting at times. Sweat rolled from my face like rain, I was at the end of my strength. I don't know how we reached home. We were exhausted.

3. Four miles; a verst is approximately two-thirds of a mile.

It was dark when we arrived—probably about eight o'clock; dinner had long been over. We triumphantly unloaded the heap of nuts on the table. Everyone, I thought, was envying us; and mother scolded father for being so late and dragging such a little child with him. She had been on the point of sending men on horseback to search for us.

The summers at Yasnaia Poliana were gay. Horseback riding, swimming in the Voronka, going for mushrooms, long walks, tennis, croquet followed one after the other. The servants were kept running all day long carrying out our wishes and whims. My sister Masha alone took no part in the general pastimes. She hurried to the village to visit the sick, worked in the field, and, in her free time, did copying for father. Once in a while, I went to the field where Masha worked, with a firm intention of helping her, but, of course, I only interfered—came dangerously near being picked up on a pitchfork, climbed upon a hay wagon, and disturbed haystacks. But when I took Masha her dinner of two hard-boiled eggs, a bottle of *kvas*,⁴ a fresh cucumber, a piece of black bread, and a small cup of raspberries or other berries I had picked myself, I felt that I, too, was doing something useful. She sat down with the women somewhere in the shade and ate. Her wavy blond hair stuck to her temples, the back of her percale dress was dark with sweat; she wiped her sunburned, freckled face with a handkerchief. "Tired? Why, Masha? Come on home!" But she smiled sadly, as if knowing something that I could not understand.

The thought of Masha in those years of my childhood and adolescence is a memory that makes my heart joyous and clear. Her whole appearance reminded one of father, although if her features were examined severally nothing but her gray eyes, attentive and deep, and her high forehead were father's. Slender and graceful, she had much dexterity: everything went the right way in her capable, slightly knotted hands. Masha's expression was earnest, concentrated, as if she were intent on what was going on inside her. No matter whom she met, she always found a kind and needed word, and it came out naturally—as if she knew what chord should be played to find a response. Everybody called Masha homely: her mouth was large like mother's, her teeth defective, and her nose slightly too large; but her whole being was lovely and attractive.

I received much tenderness and kindness from sister Masha. For a time, I suffered cruelly from large dangerous abscesses in the ears. Masha took care of me—no one could nurse a sick person as she did.

4. Russian drink made out of rye flour.

The pain was terrible. Bandaged, poulticed, I would sit upon my pillow all night through, swaying back and forth and moaning. Masha sat with me, embracing me. I laid my head on her breast and felt better.

Masha seldom scolded me. One day I was reading Mayne Reid's *Headless Horseman*. It was bedtime, but the book was so fascinating that I continued to read in bed, though it was strictly forbidden. Not until Masha was actually at my bedside did I realize that somebody had come in. Instinctively I blew out the candle. Masha became angry. "Aren't you ashamed? Not only do you do something forbidden but you want to hide it, you want to lie!" Masha's voice sounded unkind and harsh, and she almost slammed the door as she went out. "How wicked and unjust Masha is," I thought to myself, and I burst into tears. Finally, I stopped crying, and my thoughts went wandering off to the American prairies. I dozed. "Sasha—are you asleep?" Masha was sitting on the edge of my bed. "Forgive me," she said. "You know, I thought that I must have been wrong. If you are afraid of me, it means I gave you a reason for it; perhaps I had not been kind to you." And all of a sudden my feelings of offense and irritation vanished and were replaced by contentment and repentance. I felt ashamed of having wished to deceive Masha and overjoyed because she was so good that she forgave me for it. "I won't, I won't do it again," I whispered through my tears. She stroked my head, and even though the room was dark, I knew that tears were in her eyes, too, and that her face shone with kindness.

There had been many depressing things in Masha's childhood, as there were in mine. She told me once how, when she and brother Liova were growing up together--there was only one year's difference between them--mother gave all of her affection, care, and tenderness to him; while Masha, a skinny, homely girl, felt hurt and alone. I was deeply impressed by Masha's story of how mother had them sew little bags and promised to pay ten kopecks for each. They had no money, and ten kopecks seemed like great wealth. Masha tried very hard and sewed hers very neatly. Liova did his in a hit-or-miss manner. And mother gave him his ten kopecks but entirely forgot about Masha. She cried, but never dared to remind mother of it.

When Masha grew up, it somehow happened that she became alienated from mother. Mother and daughter were entirely different persons. Mother was irritated by all of Masha's acts and feelings, and condemned her for everything: for her refusal to take part of the estate, for the simplicity of her life, for her medical work. But besides

all this, she was jealous of father's affection for Masha. Masha was closer to father than any of us, and he needed her in his work, in his dealings with people. She gave father a great deal of affection and needed no words to understand him. He would look at her and she would know, with her innate sensitiveness, what he wanted of her.

My eldest sister, Tania, was the favorite of the whole family. Mother loved her infinitely more than she did Masha. Mother and Tania went out together, and afterward they always exchanged lively reminiscences. But Tania's affection for mother did not prevent her from being just as close to father and from sharing his views. She never took a sharp stand in anybody's favor and all her life tried to be a connecting link between the parents. Tania was loved by the little ones because she often gave her time to them and by the older brothers because she was their friend. Merry, always lively, with wavy chestnut hair, vivid brown eyes, a short nose that seemed to be cut off at the end, she was very attractive. She knew foreign languages well and went to an art school. Repin and other painters spoke of her great ability. It was the general belief in the family that Tania was the cleverest of all the children.

During my childhood, Tania gave much attention to me. From my earlier years, when I sometimes called her "mama," I had an especial feeling for her. She knew how to approach me. I was not afraid of her, hardly ever told her a lie, and, whenever she took me along with her, I felt that I was on a holiday.

Both my sisters apparently accepted father's ideas. But if anyone had asked which of them was more like the "dark" people, as we called father's followers, I would have replied without hesitating, "Masha, of course!" When Masha went to pitch hay with the peasants, in her plain cotton dress, her head bound with a kerchief, a rake across her shoulder, it seemed perfectly natural for her to do so. She talked with the village women as if she had lived her life with them; and they, too, forgot that she was a young lady and a countess and shared with her their most guarded secrets: that this one's husband was untrue; that the *baba* (peasant woman) over there had had an unfortunate childbirth; that another's child was sick. They came to her for medical aid; she gave them medicine, advised them, cared for the sick, helped at childbirth. The women loved her.

Once, during a village fire, when, as usual, the whole village had gathered and the men peasants stood quietly smoking their *ma-khorka*,⁵ Masha ran up and shamed them, making them carry water

5. Cheapest grade of tobacco.

from the well while she herself dipped it, standing knee deep in water, regardless of the fact that she was not well. For this she paid a cruel price, suffering for the rest of her life from a feminine ailment which was perhaps the cause of her being unable, when she married, to bear anything but stillborn children.

To Tania, "simplifying" came much harder. Merry, brilliant, coquettish, she dressed prettily, liked all beautiful things, and colors and palette suited her better than rake and pitchfork.

Once my two sisters arranged for themselves a laundry downstairs in a wing of the house, believing that it was a sin to make others wash our soiled clothes. There was much talk about the best method of wringing—whether to do it toward yourself or away from yourself. And they dreamed of buying washing, wringing, and I-don't-know-what-other machines, while for the time being they did it all by hand, rubbing their skin raw. Both sisters were good at doing things with their hands; but it was obviously make-believe with Tania, or, as our favorite childhood expression ran, "not for truth," while with Masha it was "for truth." Masha was especially good at rinsing the wash, like a real village *baba*. Barefoot, with her sleeves turned up above her elbows, she bent down from the landing over our pond and rinsed the clothes with a broad, swinging motion, then heaped a piece, flattened it with one blow of the bat, and then, with another powerful blow, pressed out the water. These two blows, one muffled and the other sharp, sounded and re-echoed over the surface of the pond—ta-tam! ta-tam!

My eldest brothers, Sergei and Ilya, did not stay long with us. They soon married and had homes of their own. Liova lived with the family more than the others. He was nervous and sickly, and mother was always anxious about him.

Andrei, Mikhail (Misha), and I—"the little ones"—grew up together. Misha was the most musical member of the family. Any melody he heard, he could pick out instantly on the piano, the guitar, or the balalaika. I remember how Shaliapin sang for the first time at our house in Moscow. Father did not like his "Song of the Flea" and "The Two Grenadiers." Shaliapin offered to sing "Dear Night," but the young pianist Goldenweiser, who accompanied him, was unable to play it without notes. Misha shyly came up to the piano and picked out the melody, and in a few minutes Shaliapin was singing to his accompaniment, which was rather primitive but quite true.

As to studying, Misha did not want to do any, and the Lyceum went

by the board. Things came to such a pass that he was threatened with expulsion if he was late once more. Mother was in despair, chided him, and threatened him, but nothing helped. And then one evening Misha again came home late and so did not want to get up the next morning, although the servant tried several times to rouse him. What was to be done? I took a pitcher full of ice-cold water, tiptoed up to Misha's bed and emptied the entire pitcher over him. In a moment a disheveled, wet head stuck out from under the covers and sleepy gray eyes looked out balefully. Misha jumped up and leaped after me. I fled along the corridor, he ran after. I ran out of the yard gate and into the street. Misha came to his senses, ran back home, dressed, and went to the Lyceum. For a long time after that, I avoided meeting him; Misha had hard fists and hit so that it smarted.

Early in September, we usually moved to Moscow, where we three young ones had to study. My brothers attended the gymnasium; I had a governess and tutors and studied at home. Father and my sisters used to stay at Yasnaia Poliana late in the autumn, and some years they left Moscow for the country in the early spring, although mother disliked very much to part with them. She asserted that without her care, without the cook, and without good food, father was sure to get sick, that the sisters would never know how to take care of him as she would, that they lived in filth and without servants, and generally were apt to do a lot of foolish things.

As far back as I can remember, father suffered chronically from pains in his stomach. Sometimes he had constipation and sometimes diarrhea, and he was especially tormented by heartburn. There was nothing that the physicians did not try on him—soda, powdered charcoal, magnesia, various mineral waters—and nothing helped. Sometimes he suffered from pains in the liver, but I do not remember his having any acute attacks. Mother used to say that earlier he had suffered terribly. His cries of pain used to awaken her. Once she came running to the drawing-room to find him rolling on the floor in torture. Consequently, she was always concerned about having light and nourishing food for him, and the question of food was very nearly made into a cult.

Every evening the cook, Semen Nikolayevich, would report to her, and they would discuss the menu at length. If, for any reason, father felt weak, mother and Semen Nikolayevich conspired to pour some meat broth clandestinely into his mushroom soup. When mother was busy, Semen Nikolayevich put the tentative menu on her desk; it was

written in a copy book which he had sewn together himself. Here, besides the daily menus of dinners and lunches, one could see instructions from her, such as "Vanichka has a stomach ache, make him some chicken cutlet and *bouillon*," or "Cook some thin Smolensk gruel in mushroom broth for Lev Nikolayevich's lunch, he has complained of pains in the stomach," and so on. Semen Nikolayevich understood mother at half a word, and he carried his culinary art to perfection. And every evening, before retiring, mother thought over lovingly and attentively what each one should be given to eat. That was her greatest pride.

At the same time, father strove to reduce his wants to the minimum; he felt no need for cooks or waiters. Whenever he made his escape with my sisters to Yasnaia Poliana, he gloried in his freedom. They would employ some plain village woman who knew nothing of cooking, and who chopped off and threw away the asparagus heads; but, on the other hand, did not attempt to mix meat broth with father's mushroom soup. I was then too little to understand much, but it always seemed to me that my father and sisters, when they went alone to Yasnaia Poliana, had a jolly time of it, like school children left without supervision. They wrote us cheerful letters; and, when the family was reunited, we heard many stories about their life in the country. I remember one about a visit from Aunt Tatiana Andreyevna, my mother's sister. They treated her to vegetarian meals, which she detested. One day, before dinner, father and my sisters dragged a live hen into the dining-room, tied her to the foot of auntie's chair and laid a big butcher's knife at her place. My aunt could not understand why they had done this. "Why, didn't you want chicken?" said father. "All right. But we have no one here who could make up his mind to slaughter the hen, so we have prepared everything for you to do it." Auntie refused meat under such conditions.

It was mother's conviction that the children ought to be educated, and that we must therefore live in Moscow; while father believed that the children should not be forced to study but should be brought up in a simple manner, and if they themselves were desirous of knowledge, they could have it. As a result, large sums of money were spent on tutors and schools, but no one felt like studying. The younger children felt the discord between the parents and naturally took from each whatever was easier to grasp and appealed more to them. The fact that father believed education indispensable for each man and that he himself to his last days tried to replenish his stock of knowledge, we ignored, catching only what he said against schooling.

Mother's words about the necessity of having plenty of money in order to be able to dress well, to keep horses, hold receptions and balls, and eat good food appealed to us. But as to her demand that we apply ourselves and graduate from our schools, that was unpleasant. We gave no thought to these things but lived as easily as possible.

CHAPTER II

LIFE IN MOSCOW

I LOVED our old house on Khamovniki Street in Moscow—and especially the garden. How shady, how immense it seemed! Paths overgrown with shrubbery were like impenetrable thickets, a group of apple or pear trees like a whole orchard; the lanes seemed to have no end. The high and inaccessible mound and the little summer house overgrown with shrubs and lined inside with paper representing galloping horses were to me full of mystery and beauty.

Besides the garden, the Khamovniki house had a large courtyard surrounded by a high fence and outbuildings. We usually came to town with a complete household: a pair of carriage horses and the old coachman Emelyanych, a cow, a wagon of hay and oats, barrels of salt cucumbers and sauerkraut, great stores of preserves. Once we even brought father's saddle horse, Malchik (Boy). I remember Malchik grazing in the garden, and myself, instead of studying, watching him chase father's Eskimo dog, Belka. The cow was housed in the barn nearest the street; behind that were the stable and the carriage barn, and the last barn was filled with books. Here were stored, in great quantities, father's works which mother published and sold. This was the money on which the whole family lived, for the books brought in about 20,000 rubles a year. In an annex lived the old manager who did our bookkeeping, and in a small watchman's lodge outside the gate lived the yardman and the coachman. A board walk led to the kitchen, which was on the other side of the house, with the servants' dining-room and the tiny room of Semen Nikolayevich.

The house was an old one. Even at that time mother used to say that it was over a hundred years old.¹ She assured everybody that the place was uncomfortable, that it was not fit for receptions, that it never could have occurred to anyone but "Liovochka" to buy a house in such an unaristocratic part of the town where there were factories all around. To me, however—when I was a child—it seemed that no other house could be as beautiful and cosy as our Khamovniki house. Naturally, we children paid little attention to its exterior, and I remember very well that when mother suddenly decided to renovate it,

1. The great fire which swept over Moscow in 1812 during the first days of Napoleon's occupation of the city resulted in the destruction of, or serious damage to, most of the buildings.

and the old brown house, with its gloss long gone, suddenly became rose color with pistachio-green shutters, we all felt offended for its sake. It became repulsive, like an old woman trying to look young.

We lived downstairs. Here were the dining-room, our parents' bedroom, Tania's room, that of the boys, the nursery, my room, and the governess'. Upstairs were the reception rooms: the small entrance hall which Tania arranged as a reception room for herself and where young people usually gathered; then the ballroom, the big drawing-room, and the small one. Those rooms did not seem cosy to me. Only the big *takhta*—the oriental couch—in the drawing-room was nice; it was broad and low and very well fitted to turn somersaults upon. In the large ballroom the nicest place was the bearskin under the piano. I remember how I liked to lie on the bearskin, snuggle against the bear's head and listen when someone was playing.

Two short flights of steps led from the reception rooms to a corridor—one from the ballroom and the other from the little drawing-room. The first room that opened into the corridor was sister Masha's; it was low, with small windows. Then followed the rooms of the housekeeper, the seamstress, the waiter; and at the very end, in the corner of the house, separated from all the rest, were two small rooms with low ceilings—father's rooms: one with a washstand behind a walnut wardrobe; and one, to the right, his study, the "holy of holies" to our childish imaginations.

The rooms of my two sisters were quite different. Tania's bedroom downstairs and her little reception hall upstairs were arranged very tastefully. Comfortable furniture, small divans, unusual homecraft table covers, pictures, albums, no end of photographs of relatives and friends—all were somehow scattered without system but with much taste. In Masha's room there was nothing superfluous. Simple, hard chairs and table, a hard bed without a mattress—everything gave the impression of severity and cleanliness. I liked to go to Tania's room; there were many interesting pictures in it, and besides, in the big wooden homecraft bowl, there were often mixed nuts. But in Masha's room I felt almost as shy as in father's. Everything there was stern and severe; sometimes there was the smell of medicine.

In the winter of 1891, father, Tania, and Masha did not go to Yasnaia, but went to Riasan province to help the sufferers from the great famine of that year. At the same time, brother Liova went to Samara province. Mother had to stay behind in Moscow with us little

ones. Letters came, of which scattered echoes reached our nursery. They told of many horrors; people were swelling from hunger and dying. They had no firewood and were burning straw from their roofs to keep warm. We received samples of bread, black as coal, made from goosefoot. We looked at the bread, felt of it, and found it impossible to believe that people could eat it. I fearfully imagined my father and sisters living in appalling conditions, eating badly, wandering about in blizzards. Mother constantly worried about all of them. Bending over her writing desk, she sorted letters and wrote something with an earnest face while I, a small child, sat on the floor and examined the envelopes she threw into the waste basket. They were often sealed with five wax seals. I played with the envelopes and spelt out the words with difficulty: "Enclosed three rubles!" "Enclosed one hundred rubles!" For the first time in my life, I felt the importance of money and the desire that more and more such envelopes should come to us.

Provisions came, too, and mother sent everything away "over there," where, as I knew, my father and sisters were doing great deeds.

When I grew a little older, my favorite spot in the winter was the skating yard. Father used to take part in the activities there. A small space in the courtyard and a wooden mound had to be cleared of snow. Then hundreds of barrels of water were poured on to obtain a smooth, icy surface. It was seldom that anybody was hired for this work. We all helped in it. Some mornings, as the yardman opened the outside shutters and I looked out of the window, I saw father pulling a little sled with a barrel full of water to the skating yard. His beard was covered with solid frost, his face was red, thick steam was rising from his mouth. Quietly, without haste, he pulled the sled to the proper place, lifted and overturned the barrel. The water quickly spread over the surface, father adroitly sprang aside, replaced the barrel on the sled and pulled it back again.

The well was in the interior of the garden. A small shelter was built over the primitive hand pump. When water was pumped, the whole little structure creaked and swayed. Father carried water for the kitchen every day. He harnessed himself to the sled, brought the barrel to the well, turned about, and pumped. The barrel was heavy, and he pulled it with difficulty on the narrow winding path. The sled often slipped sideways on the turns, father pressed hard on the frozen rope across his chest, the sled righted again, and some of the transparent, bluish water leaped out of the barrel upon the snow.

Father yearned for motion—for the physical work to which he became so accustomed while in the country. There he always managed to have enough of it—sawing wood, working in the fields, walking a great deal. He disliked city life. Longing for exercise, he even began learning to ride a bicycle. At that time bicycles had solid tires and no coaster brakes. Father amused us once by a story of his early apprenticeship on that vehicle. As he was wobbling once from side to side on the training field, he saw a lady going in the opposite direction. She also was none too sure of herself. "As all my thoughts were centered on the lady, I felt drawn precisely in her direction," father said. "Of course we collided and both fell!"

Mother used to say: "One never knows what fancies will come into Liovochka's head!"

Once, when a big sale was going on, father announced—to our great surprise, for he never went to big stores—"I was at Muir and Merilee's today. I spent over two hours there."

"What were you doing?" mother asked.

"Observing. It was very interesting. If a lady comes in a two-horse carriage, the doorman springs forward, unhooks the robe, and helps the lady out. If a lady comes in a one-horse carriage, he only opens the door respectfully to her. If the lady comes by hackney coach, he pays no attention."

Saturday was our *jour fixe*. Between lunch and dinner, ladies called in their carriages. A lackey in dress coat led them upstairs to the drawing-room, where mother received them. In the evening many guests came, chiefly young people—friends and acquaintances of Tania and my brothers. Often mother made me take the seat behind the samovar and pour tea. I was ill at ease at these ceremonies.

It happened sometimes that during such a *soirée* the lackey took one of father's "dark" visitors to him, trying to walk with him through the rooms as inconspicuously as possible. There was amazement in the guest's timidly bent figure, in the furtive, embarrassed look that he gave the assembly. "This way, please," the lackey would say as if unaware of the visitor's distracted haste and confusion. He opened a small door, pasted over with wall paper, leading from the ballroom, pointed to the steps that led to the dark corridor and let the visitor go ahead of him.

We children were often taken to balls. At one of the children's cos-

tume parties the cream of Moscow aristocracy was expected to gather, and it was hoped that Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich would come. On that day, a *coiffeur* from "Theodore" came and made me a huge coiffure—from my own hair, it is true, but in gray. To produce it he used a staggering amount of pomade and powder and no end of hairpins, all of which made my head ache. I carefully avoided meeting father when the costume was put on me, and tried to run straight out of my room through the dark corridor to the anteroom and slip into the closed coach, although mother insisted that I should show my costume to father.

When the ball was in full swing the Grand Duke came. Presently, as I was dancing the quadrille with my partner, a secondary school pupil, Count K——, I heard a tap on the window; there stood father in his short winter coat and round cap, and with him sister Masha. I was terribly glad to see them—they looked so kind and smiling. I wanted very much to run out into the yard; but my partner remained entirely indifferent and said that it would be awkward to go out just then.

Once there was a dancing *soirée* at the house of my friend, Nadia Martynova. I was brought and left there. During supper Nadia's brothers sat next to me and kept refilling my glass with champagne. It was hot in the rooms, I was thirsty, and the ice-cold champagne quenched my thirst very nicely. When we left the table, I felt that people, walls, and everything else were swimming away from me. With great difficulty, I walked to the ballroom and sat down, waiting for the mazurka to begin. Suddenly, as if through a haze, I saw father's dog Belka. "It only seems so to me!" I thought. But Belka, her collar tinkling, made the round of all the guests with an embarrassed look, smelled them, and finding me at last, joyously waved her bushy tail and lay down at my feet. Then father entered the room. I shall never forget the feeling of shame and terror which overcame me. "What if he notices me?" The intoxication left me in a moment, the haze dropped from my sight. Dancing, meanwhile, had stopped. The appearance of father, in his peasant half-length coat and with his dog, in the midst of the ball, had made a great impression. The hostess and the guests surrounded him. But father, as if feeling very uncomfortable, hastily left the room.

My little brother Vanichka occupies one of the largest places in my early memories. He was born a tiny and weak baby; everyone was worried over his health, and somehow it so happened that mother's

life became centered on him, and I was left in the background. Nurse's tenderness for me also cooled. "Go on, don't bother," she would say. "Don't you see that Vanichka is crying?" And she would angrily shove me aside. "Be still—keep still, Vanichka is asleep—I must have some gruel made for Vanichka—Vanichka is not well," was often heard around the house. Soon I became used to the idea that the center of my life, too, was in Vanichka, that we must all take care of him; and I ceased to covet the privileges that were reserved for him.

When Vanichka passed infancy, we saw plainly that he was much like father—though it was not a resemblance in features, but rather some inner likeness, as with sister Masha. He was thin, with a transparent skin and attentive gray-blue eyes; and on his high forehead was a blue vein which made him look like a grown man. In winter he did not have his hair cut and it curled, flaxen and silky, down over his shoulders.

Vanichka was an unusual child—it is said of such children that they do not live. His outstanding trait was kindness. It was amazing to see how this small being, as soon as his intellect awoke within him, always thought of old nurse—who was tired and sleepy—and of mother—who sat at his bedside when he was sick. "Go to bed, mama dear; I want nothing—nothing at all." He did not like people to say to him, "This is yours, Vanichka; this is for you." "No, no, I don't want it to be mine. Everything is everybody's."

Everyone in the house not only loved Vanichka but always feared for him. He was nervous and abnormally sensitive. Things which glanced off my mind without leaving a trace would cut deeply into his consciousness. He could not bear to have people or animals suffer. He wanted to help all of them. Quarrels and bad feeling between people hurt him deeply. We felt that in this frail, little body a signal spirit dwelled—some unchildlike, wise understanding of life. It seems to me that father was keenly aware of it. It may be that he thought, like many others, that Vanichka would continue his life's task. When Vanichka approached father, and, raising his little face without a trace of embarrassment, talked to him like a grown person, I saw what great tenderness passed through father's glance. He smiled, but there was suffering in the smile.

Dear little Vanichka! He was more just and wise than the grown people. With some deep intuition he sensed the truth and reached out for it as a plant reaches toward the sun. How many times, not knowing that he did it, he taught older ones around him! When

someone acted meanly, Vanichka suffered so intensely that, out of love for him, one hastened to correct the mistake. He felt that he was better loved by the family than I was, and that hurt him also. Every small injustice to me upset him. Someone would give him candy and forget about me, but he instantly remembered, "And Sasha?" Yet, despite this sensitivity for others and unusual feeling for justice, Vanichka was a true child in everything else. He loved to run, play pranks, and romp.

At Yasnaya Poliana, our life was more or less normal; but at Moscow, it was altogether unsuited for such a nervous and fragile child as Vanichka. Mother could not keep from constantly going into raptures over him, showing him off to everybody and boasting about him. She loved Vanichka more than anything else in the world, and she could never feast her eyes on him enough.

One incident stands out in my memory. Upstairs, in the big drawing-room, mother and Vanichka were sitting at a desk. Mother was talking to him and then writing something down. I wanted to know what they were doing. I approached them from the left and from the right, trying in vain to attract mother's attention. Finally, I felt myself superfluous and went away. Soon Vanichka joined me. He was tired of sitting still, and we went back to the childish affairs that were of interest to us. Mother continued to write at the desk. A few days later, with wonder, I heard mother telling some guests that Vanichka was surely going to be a writer because he had written a remarkable story about a little dachshund. How well I remember father's face when he heard about Vanichka's talent and the story he wrote. He knitted his eyebrows and bent his head, but did not say a word.

On February 26, 1894, father wrote the following postscript in a letter to sister Tania:

Just now all are going somewhere to a party. All are dressing and Theodore is curling Sasha's and Vanichka's hair. It's all very merry, but it pained me much to see Vanichka curled and Sasha dressed up. The only salvation is in the human soul being hermetically sealed and protected from harm. They are now all there at the party, and Masha and I are alone at home. She is working industriously. . . .²

The family did not like the way mother was bringing up Vanichka, but it was impossible to go against her wishes. Everyone felt that another child in his place would inevitably be spoiled. But it was diffi-

2. *Sovremennye Zapiski (Annales contemporaines)*, Paris.

Alexandra and Vanichka



Vanichka



cult to spoil Vanichka. We were often taken to children's evening parties, dressed in our best, Vanichka wearing a little white flannel suit with blue anchors, short trousers, open slippers, and black stockings that looked very smart on his thin, shapely legs. Little girls who used to dislike dancing with small boys danced gladly with him. For the mazurka, Vanichka always invited my friend Nadia—a thin, blond girl, who was as graceful as he but much older. He liked Nadia, and she treated him lovingly and considerately. Sometimes they were chosen to dance the mazurka at the head of the column. In sight of everybody, the tiny boy led his graceful lady. Vanichka danced like a grown man. He stamped his little foot, went down on one knee and again flew ahead over the smooth floor.

About midnight—and sometimes later—we went home. It was dark in the closed carriage; the pair of black horses beat the pavement rhythmically with their hoofs, and the carriage swung softly on its springs. Vanichka sat there, pale, his little face drawn, but his excitement far from gone. He and mother exchanged impressions. Sometimes I took part in the conversation, but more often I went to sleep there in the carriage. I remember the tired feeling we had when walking along the corridor to our nursery. Nurse or the maid pulled our clothes off over our heads, we fell into our beds and were instantly asleep. Sometimes, however, we were too excited to sleep and talked for a long time.

Vanichka was nervous and sickly. One winter, he was ill particularly often. He had fever all the time. First it was high, then it went down to 100.4 degrees and stayed there a long time. The doctor called regularly; Vanichka was stuffed with quinine but failed to improve. He became thinner and paler. Dark circles appeared under his eyes, the skin was more transparent and the blue vein on his forehead more prominent. Then, no one knew why, the fever left him suddenly. Vanichka went out walking with me; dancing lessons were resumed. Mother regained her spirits, we all became cheerful again.

I had a dream. We are at Yasnaia. Vanichka and I are climbing up a winding staircase to the second story where our room is. The staircase is steep, dark. We climb on and on. Vanichka is ahead of me. I follow closely after. "Slowly, Vanichka, slowly!" I cry to him. "I cannot keep up with you. Wait for me!" But he climbs higher and higher. I strain to keep pace with him but cannot. It grows light over my head, and I see—the sky! Vanichka leaves the stairs and rises into the air. I reach out after him, I call him, but he rises higher and higher

into the sky. Another moment—Vanichka is no longer seen. I cry—and wake up in tears. Thank God, it's only a dream!

Misfortune came suddenly. In the morning, Vanichka was merry and mischievous, and, toward evening, he burned as if on fire. Mother sat by him, and he comforted her. "It's nothing, mama dear, nothing." The thermometer registered over 104 degrees. The doctor diagnosed a galloping form of scarlet fever. Toward evening of the next day, Vanichka died.

I do not remember how I learned about it. They had separated us—put me in another room across the corridor. I was sick—perhaps also with scarlet fever in a light form. Dead stillness reigned in the house. Everyone spoke in whispers and walked on tiptoe. From time to time, wild, insane cries pierced the silence. Mother, out of her mind with despair, was convulsed with hysterics.

They did not allow me to go into the nursery, but in the night when the house was quiet I crept in, shivering in my nightgown. The powerful, sweetish fragrance of flowers mixed with that of wax and incense struck me. Upon a table in the middle of the room stood a small coffin. Candles were burning. I stood up on my toes and looked in. It was Vanichka; but the expression was not his. It was important and alien. I reached over and kissed his forehead. An icy cold pierced me. I shrieked and ran headlong from the room. Tedious, anguish-filled days dragged on. Everyone feared for mother. Sometimes she became a little quieter, gathered Vanichka's playthings, handled them over and over again, had his pictures rephotographed; then again she sobbed and cried out that she was going to kill herself. "Why, why is God so unjust to me? Why? Why did he take Vanichka from me?" she cried. And once she sobbed out, beside herself, "Why—why Vanichka? Why not Sasha?"

"Enough, countess, that is a sin—enough!" niania said to her. "How can you let yourself be so upset?" But nurse herself grieved no less than mother. Her eyes were never dry.

And father? I heard him go into mother's room and soothe her, but from my sisters I knew that he suffered intensely.

As for myself, I not only yearned for Vanichka, but I felt deeply unfortunate and guilty because I, vigorous, healthy, not needed by anyone, was left to live; while he, beloved by everyone, had died. I wept and asked, "Lord, O Lord, why did Vanichka die? Why not I?"

I thought of Vanichka often but for a long time was unable to picture him alive. I saw him as he lay in his coffin, and the fragrance of hyacinths and incense pursued me relentlessly.

CHAPTER III

EARLY SORROWS

MELANCHOLY hung over the whole household, and mother grieved more than any of us and could find comfort in nothing. Now she went from one church to another, praying, going to confession and communion; now she went to the grave of Vanichka in a quiet cemetery out in the fields. There also was the grave of Aliosha, a brother whom I do not remember. Mother's stately figure in mourning is still before my eyes, bending over a small fresh mound. Her trembling lips whispered something, and tears flowed uninterruptedly from her reddened eyes. She intrusted the care of the two little graves to a peasant family of the village of Nikolskoye, and she liked to talk with them—probably their simple words calmed her.

We were amazed at mother's meekness. She seemed born anew—she was kind, never angry, and she wept unceasingly. Father was comforted in his grief by the thought that misfortune seemed to draw her away from worldly things and vanity, and to awaken in her spiritual, deeper interests which would not only lighten her own life but would make her nearer to him.¹

Mother gave me much of her time: took care of finding good tutors and governesses for me, called doctors if I was not well, tried to develop my musical gifts by taking me to concerts, made me read aloud. But I could not take Vanichka's place; and she could not give me the tenderness and motherly caresses for which I yearned so much. Sometimes I timidly tried to approach her with that feeling, but she did not understand. "What is it you want, Sasha?" she would ask with such genuine surprise that I instantly recoiled. Little by little, a feeling of fear arose in me. I did not understand what she wanted of me and could not tell for what I was to expect greater punishment—a broken teacup, a badly learned lesson, or telling a lie—I knew from experience that I might get equally severe treatment for all three and tried to hide my acts from her.

1. Father wrote in a letter to his friend and my godmother, A. A. Tolstoy:
"Yesterday she went to confession to a very intelligent priest, Valentine (friend and spiritual teacher of my sister Mashenka), who told Sonia some very good words; that mothers who lose children always turn to God first, but afterwards usually go back to worldly cares and again draw away from God, and he warned her against this. And it does seem to me that this will not happen to her."

everybody rejoiced over my coming into the world, and wait impatiently for the end of the story.

"Well, niania, and what happened next?"

"Well—nothing."

"How nothing? Tell me, what was next?"

Niania sits down again and begins to wipe the cups. "Next, the countess didn't want to nurse you, that's what was next. She felt too sick of everything. Things just wouldn't get right with the count. He acted queer those days. He would go off to the fields to work with the peasants, or he would be making boots, or else he would be wanting to give everything away altogether. Of course, the countess did not like that. Here they had lived and lived and got things into nice shape—and then again there were the little children. So the countess took a wet nurse for you, just to spite the count, because she knew he didn't like it. It was a healthy *baba*, a fat one."

Undisguised hostility sounds in nurse's voice. A boundless sadness invades my soul. I try to whisk my tears away without her noticing.

"There you are!" niania exclaims angrily. "What is this? If I had known you were such a cry baby, I wouldn't have told you, not for anything."

Old niania had been in the house longer than any of the other servants. She lost all attachment to her village, forgot it, and visited there but seldom. Her whole life became concentrated in our family. She brought up all of us, beginning with brother Andrei, and saw the funerals of Aliosha and Vanichka. Short, thick-set, and broad-shouldered, nurse was of a resolute and bold temper, did not search her pockets for a retort, as the Russian saying goes, and was afraid of no one, not even of mother before whom all the other servants trembled. Her attitude toward my father, who was her equal in years, was one of indulgent respect, but she did not approve of him.

"Well, niania, what do you think about death?" father asked her once.

"And why should I think about it, Your Excellency? It'll come anyway, it won't ask us."

On Thursday evenings, mother and I used to go to ensemble concerts. The music was complicated and difficult; I could not understand it and only wished it would end. The next morning at nine the tutor was coming; I had not yet learned my lessons and that meant getting up early. But mother, elegantly dressed and lively, did not notice that I was bored, and I never dared tell her that I did not want

to go to the concert. She would surely be angry with me for such a refusal and would say, as she sometimes did: "Yes, an instructive, noble amusement does not interest you; all you want is to climb fences with boys and play street games."

As was not infrequent, I fell asleep during the program. Somewhere far, far off the violin sang with its thin voice and the bass notes of the 'cello droned. When I awoke it seemed as though a long time had passed, and I found it strange that nothing had changed, that the musicians were still intent on their playing, the candelabrum still shining, and the public still listening attentively. "This concert will never end," I thought. Not far from us sat Sergei Ivanovich Taneyev, an outstanding composer and musician. Mother chatted with him and after the concert suggested walking home. From the Hall of Nobility to our house was a walk of about fifty minutes. It was after eleven. I was terribly sleepy, my eyelids stuck together. I silently dragged myself after them.

Taneyev often came to see us at that time. He had small eyes and a kind, red face that was always glistening as if oiled, framed in a small beard; his fat body seemed packed into his clothes, and his thin, choking laughter reminded me of the gurgling of a setting hen. He lived in Mertyv Lane, in a small rear cottage, with his old nurse, Pelageia Vasilievna, who had the swaying gait of a duck and legs bent with rheumatism. She adored her fosterling, took great care of him, and when she thought that somebody was bothering him, sighed deeply and said: "Ah, you know Sergei Ivanovich is so tired, he played Beethoven's *Sonata Passonata* all morning!"

Taneyev was very friendly with father and with our whole family; he was a pleasant talker, and his music was a source of great delight to us. When he sat down at the piano he was entirely transfigured: his face became solemn and serious. His playing was excellent. In the beginning of our acquaintance, I liked Sergei Ivanovich, and I liked his cheerful old nurse. But little by little this feeling changed. The more I noticed mother's cordial manner with Taneyev, the less good feeling I had toward him. When Sergei Ivanovich came, I demonstratively went to my room. His heavy figure, his old-womanish laughter, the reddened tip of his small, neatly cut nose, everything about him irritated me now. Sometimes coachman Emelyanych, huge in his padded coat, the taut reins vibrating slightly in his hands, would bring up the sleigh with its fur-trimmed robe and the dark gray beauty, Lira, in the harness. Mother, in a velvet-covered fur coat and a little seal hat, was going marketing. "Is anybody coming today?" I

would ask, although I knew perfectly well that Taneyev was coming. "I really don't know," mother would say, "Sergei Ivanovich, perhaps." About eight o'clock, smiling and rubbing his hands, Sergei Ivanovich appeared. He stayed all evening, played the piano sometimes and consumed the caviar and the bonbons from Albert with great delight.

Sometimes, when mother and I were on our way home from the Passage stores or Muir and Merilees', mother would give a light knock on the broad padded back of Ermelyanych with her tortoise shell lorgnette: "You will turn in at Mertyv Lane." "Yes, madam." And, turning to me, she would add: "We must see how Sergei Ivanovich's old nurse is getting along." I would keep silent, setting my teeth. Nurse Pelageia Vasilievna, with her good-natured freckled face and swaying gait, now seemed hateful to me. Sometimes, during such a visit, Sergei Ivanovich was unexpectedly at home. We would find him playing something or drinking tea in his tiny dining-room. He would jump up hastily and clumsily and become frantically busy—he did not know how to be hospitable. Niania usually came to his rescue, asked us to sit down, and served us tea.

I always tried to find a pretext now for not attending the Thursday evening concerts—I had too many home lessons, or a headache. Mother, too, saw my feelings and took me there much less often.

In the spring, we went on out-of-town rides with Taneyev. Mother was kind, cheerful, dressed up. But the more lively she was, the gloomier I became. I pouted and said nothing all the way. Nothing could cheer me. Mother recited her favorite poem:

Oh, how in our declining days
We love more tenderly and sadly—²

This verse somehow became associated in my mind with Sergei Ivanovich Taneyev. I began to hate it and was immensely glad when I found out that father did not like it either. "A repulsive poem," he used to say, "praises driveling old-age love!" In this tormenting period of my life, I learned what sleeplessness was.

One day, I told Masha how I hated Taneyev. I was afraid to speak of it at first, but suddenly, glancing up at her, I understood that Masha knew it all and that it tormented her as much as it did me. Then my words flowed on in a torrent. I could not stop. I had to lay before her everything that had pained me so long. Masha was frightened. She tried to calm me, saying that there was nothing bad in mother's liking for Taneyev. "Look at father, how meek and patient

². Tiutchev.

he is, although he suffers." I knew that there was nothing "bad" in mother's feeling for Taneyev, but what was I to do so that the whole thing would become less galling to me? On this Masha could give no advice.

Ah, Masha! It was not long before she herself acted so that it was impossible to understand her. A cousin of ours, Nikolai Obolensky, or Kolasha, as we called him—a grandson of my Aunt Maria Nikolaevna—was living with us. He was going to graduate from the university, and mother invited him to stay at our house. Kolasha was with us uneventfully day in and day out, and nobody paid much attention to him. He got up late, seldom went to the university, read novels, and smoked cigarettes. And all of a sudden, I learned that Masha was going to marry him! At first I would not believe it. What could there be in common between Masha and this handsome young man with the innate laziness of a lord, with a slow, elastic gait and flowing speech, who rolled his *r*'s elegantly in the French manner? Kolasha was far removed from the nimbus that surrounded sister Masha in my imagination. I could not bear the thought of her leaving father for his sake. But she loved Kolasha and decided to marry him. I remember that she found the church formalities very difficult. The priest objected to marrying relatives; then again, he demanded a certificate that Masha had been to confession and communion, which she had not. The wedding ritual itself was objectionable to her, who, following father, had left the organized church. She tried to do it all as simply as possible. Bride and groom, in everyday clothes, went to the church, where only a few relatives were present. But this was nothing compared with the compromise on which she had to decide as a result of her marriage. Her health was poor, there was no money, Kolasha did not care to take a position; and Masha had to ask that part of the property, which she had previously renounced, be given to her. I do not know which was harder for her to bear—father's indulgent and loving silence or mother's reproaches.

Father lived in the midst of his family, but he was alone. Some oppressed him with their devotion, others demanded a high price for their sacrifices; some burdened him with their admiration, others chagrined him with their complete indifference to his ideas. Masha alone loved him without ever a backward glance, demanding nothing, and giving him all that he needed most: care, tenderness, sensitive understanding. Masha went away, but father always thought about her and wrote to her.

CHAPTER IV

RESURRECTION. TANIA'S MARRIAGE. EXCOMMUNICATION

In 1898, father suddenly resumed artistic work—he began *Resurrection*. Contrary to his rule he was interested this time in the material returns from the work. He needed the money to send the Dukhobors to Canada. The Russian Government continued to persecute them for their refusal to bear arms, and they had decided to emigrate. The serial rights were sold to Marx, publisher of the weekly *Niva (The Field)*, for 1,000 rubles¹ per printed sheet (sixteen pages).

The dining-room table on the lower floor of our Moscow house was heaped with manuscripts and proofs. Everybody was busy copying—Tania, mother, guests. Father came down from his study once in a while and gave instructions. I envied them all; I too wished to take part in the common work. Tania must have understood and pitied me; she allowed me to copy father's letters under the press.² I worked for all I was worth. Straining my muscles, I screwed the press so hard that the table groaned.

The novel was finished in 1899 and the last proofs came from Marx. Father took them upstairs to look at them—and again changed everything! But it proved impossible to make all of these new corrections in the foreign edition; and the Russian edition was considerably mutilated by the censors. Thus it happened that, for a long time, there was no fully authorized text of *Resurrection* in print.

Tania's marriage took place the same year. She was already thirty-five years old, and Mikhail Sergeyevich Sukhotin, her chosen husband, was considerably her senior. His first wife left him six children, of whom two were older than I. Tania hesitated a long time. "Well, Sasha, what do you think about it. Shall I marry or not?" she asked me. I did not answer. I buried my face in a sofa cushion and cried bitterly. Sister laughed, then cried, also. Not a single person in the household was in sympathy with Tania's marriage project; in fact,

1. About \$500.

2. A transfer process. A page of manuscript, written with special ink, is put into a book containing sheets of fine transparent paper. The paper is moistened and the book placed in a screw press. Many of Tolstoy's letters were duplicated in this way.

everyone was against it. Mother had always dreamed of a brilliant match for Tania, her favorite daughter. She wished her to marry Mikhail Alexandrovich Stakhovich or Count O——; Tania had never been short of suitors. And here she was about to marry a widower with six children! Even the old servants grumbled: "What is the matter with Tatiana Lvovna? Marrying into all that brood of children!"

In the church, I could not keep from crying, although I feared that Tania would notice it and be offended. Tears ran from father's eyes, also. After the wedding Mikhail Sergeyevich embarrassed me by asking me to address him with the familiar "thou." "You can say 'thou' and yet call me 'Mikhail Sergeyevich.' It will be both respectful and sister-like," he urged me. But I looked at the gray-headed, respectable, middle-aged man with a round stomach and could not make up my mind. It was not until much later that I got used to him and began calling him "Uncle Misha."

As time went on, everybody became attached to Mikhail Sergeyevich. Cheerful, witty, with an excellent disposition, he always brought animation into our midst. Father liked to talk and play chess with him. We also came to like his family. I became most friendly with Natasha and with my equal in years, Misha.

Both Tania and Masha were destined to suffer much grief in connection with their marriages. They were very happy with their husbands but suffered from the same inexplicable, dreadful deficiency—they carried their children for seven, sometimes eight months, and then gave birth to stillborn babies. Not only my sisters themselves and their husbands but all of us waited every time in torment for the end of their pregnancies. We feared to talk of it or ask questions. But from the despair, the hopeless anguish in the faces of my sisters, we could guess that the movements of the child were weakening, and finally that they had ceased. Fear for the child turned into worry for the mother and terror before the impending fruitless suffering and deathly peril. I experienced a feeling of physical pain when thinking of this childbirth. "To marry, ever in my life?" I thought with a shudder. "Never, not for anything in the world."

After Tania's marriage, the family became still lonelier. There were now left only father, mother, brother Misha, and I. Then Misha finished his term as volunteer in the Sumskoy regiment—he never graduated from any higher educational institution—and married Miss

Glebova, a fine girl whom he had loved, I believe, since he was eleven years old.

But in spite of this, our house was never deserted. There was the same commotion, and we had as many servants as before.

As a rule, people select their friends and acquaintances according to their own tastes. In our family, we were unable to do this. Father's name attracted many vain people, often shallow persons who tried to win a place in our household. We were unusually tolerant. A person would appear once, then come again; perhaps nobody liked him much, but he was not much noticed in the crowd. He would come back persistently and try to render petty services to members of the family. Little by little, we would get used to him, cease to mind him, and sometimes, forgetting ourselves, speak in his presence of our personal and family matters. He, in turn, presently considered himself as "one of the crowd." A few years later, it would come out that he "had been an intimate friend of the family" or perhaps "of Tolstoy himself" and had published memoirs.

I know for a fact that many others had serious questions to discuss with father, questions which would have interested him also, but delicacy of feeling prevented them from imposing their presence on him. Many years after father's death, I worked over his archives in the Rumiantsev Museum at Moscow. A writer of repute worked with me. With deep interest and love, he asked me many questions about Lev Nikolayevich and grieved that he had never had a chance to come to see him and speak with him on the many questions that occupied his mind.

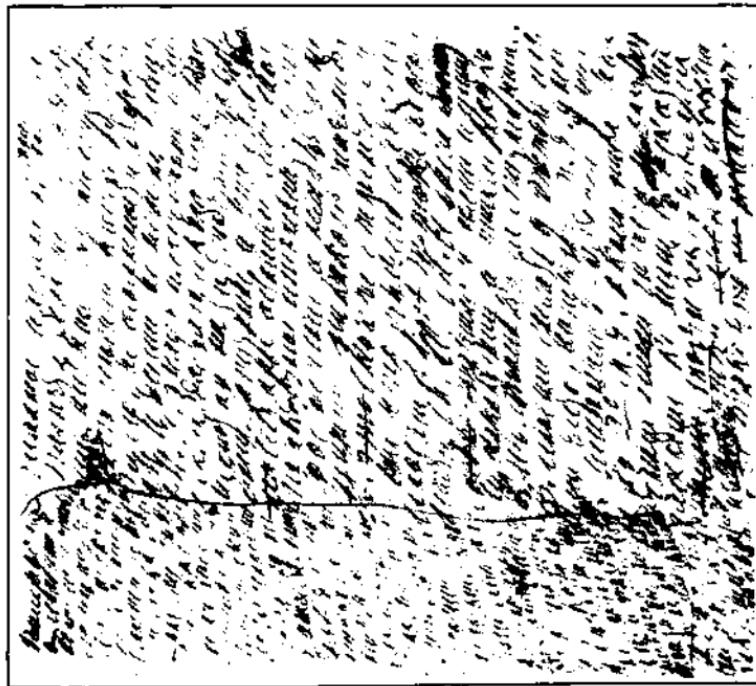
"But why did you never come to Yasnaia Poliana?" I asked.

"I did come once," he replied. "I walked into the park through the front gates, turned off the drive, sat down on a bench, remained there several hours in impossible hesitation, and went back. I couldn't make up my mind. As the train carried me away from Yasnaia Poliana, I wept."

Tania's friend, Julia Ivanovna Igumnova, who lived with us for many years, became extremely useful in the house after my sisters had married and when I was not yet old enough to help father. She had been a classmate of Tania's at art school and had come to Yasnaia Poliana to paint portraits and simply stayed on. Julia Ivanovna laughed a great deal, displaying large teeth and shaking her short hair, loved to tell jokes, sang popular songs in a soft bass voice, and painted horses in oils. She used to lie for hours on the sofa talking in



Tolstoy in his study



Manuscript page of "Resurrection"

a drawing manner, expressive of endless laziness, about anything or nothing at all.

Time passed. Important events were drawing near. In February, 1901, the Holy Synod excommunicated father from the Russian Orthodox church. At that time, the Government was especially repressive. The public temper was increasingly irritated by death penalties, exiles, and censorship, and responded by students' political meetings and protests. Prohibited literature was printed and distributed. When father was excommunicated, the Russian intelligentsia seemed to rejoice at a pretext for venting their indignation against the Government. From all sides, letters, telegrams, addresses, even presents, came to our house. Men students, women students, workers, peasants, the intelligentsia, the rank and file of citizens, all of these diverse groups hastened to express to father their admiration and devotion. The two fables, "The Lion and the Asses" and "The Victorious Pigeons,"³ in which the Government was made a laughing stock, went from hand to hand; of course, they could not be published. People stopped father in the street, greeting him with rapturous shouting. Throngs of

3.

The Victorious Pigeons

How all the trouble started, this I truly could not tell;
 I only know that seven humble pigeons, learning that the lion
 Did not desire to keep their customs holy
 And even dared—such was his boldness!—
 To live as lions do,
 Resolved to exclude him from their feathery flock.
 No longer is it secret
 That to the lion a decree was sent
 Forbidding him ever to fly with pigeons
 Until, like them, he learns to coo
 And pick up crumbs.
 The pigeons now triumph: "O miracle, the victory is ours!
 "We truly dealt his justice to the lion!
 "And in our persons we contrive to join
 "The serpent's gentleness, the wisdom of a fowl!"

We might, perchance, be asked the question:
 "Pray, where lies victory, we fail to see . . .?"
 But since the rumor has it
 That to the Holy Ghost himself these pigeons are related,
 Let anyone who would remain unscathed
 Make no such queries bold,
 But from his own appointed cote
 Sing praise to pigeons blest—
 To pigeons, BEARERS OF VICTORY!*

* The name of Pobedonostsev, at that time head of the Holy Synod and moving spirit of many reactionary measures, meant "bearer of victory."

students came to the gates of our Moscow house. I think that if the Holy Synod had considered in advance the results of its move it would not have acted as it did.

The fact of being excommunicated left father completely indifferent. But mother, who considered herself a true daughter of the Orthodox Church and father an unbeliever, felt insulted. She told anyone who cared to listen how indignant she was against the Synod and the clergy, and with her characteristic rashness wrote a letter to the Metropolitan Anthony.

Disorders broke out here and there. In Petrograd, on Kazansky Square, the Cossacks beat the people in a street gathering with their whips. Prince Viazemsky, who was present, tried to stop them but was shoved aside and for his efforts received a reprimand from the Sovereign. Father was greatly touched by Viazemsky's act and wrote him a letter. Shortly afterward, in retaliation for the protests against the flogging, the Government closed down the "Writers' Union." Again, an address was written which father and people of our acquaintance signed. A revolutionary mood came over all of us. But as soon as I tried to take part in the general agitation, people stopped me: "Wait—you're too young. Don't bother your head over it."

Finally Misha Sukhotin, my sister's stepson, and I abandoned our studies and devoted ourselves to distributing forbidden literature. An endless number of times we copied by hand the two satiric fables and distributed them among friends, inscribing the top with big letters: "Request to hand on." We also tried to copy father's articles, "Reply to the Synod" and "To the Tsar and His Helpers," but this was such a task that I finished only one copy of the "Reply" and handed it to my history teacher for further distribution.

Misha and I looked about for more efficient methods of work and, one day, on coming home from the gymnasium, Misha told me that he had got hold of a hectograph and would bring it home after dark. All through the evening, I could not stay still. Every ring of the doorbell sent me flying along the dark corridor to see who was coming. It was late when Misha brought the case, and we carried it quietly through the pantry to his room. When everybody had gone to bed, we started work. The article had to be copied in hectograph ink and impressed on gelatine, from which the printing was to be done. We spoiled the first sheets; the work just wouldn't go. But, little by little, we settled down to it, and it went smoothly. Something like a hundred copies could be printed. We worked several nights. We issued

one "edition," as we proudly called it, of the "Reply to the Synod," several editions of the two fables, and began printing the article "To the Tsar and His Helpers." But we were not destined to finish this. Someone in the house had spied on us and told mother that we were staying up nights and probably doing something we shouldn't.

We were so carried away by the work that we never heard someone come to the door and push it open.

"What are you doing here?" Mother stood on the threshold. Her eyebrows were knitted, her lips tightly pressed, her eyes flashing with anger.

"We— we— we are printing—"

"What?"

"Printing—"

Misha tried to look casual and began to explain that we could not remain indifferent to the general protest against the act of the Synod, that we wished to spread the ideas of Lev Nikolayevich, and so forth. But mother only knitted her eyebrows tighter. It seemed to me that everything around us shook when the storm of her wrath broke over our heads. She was going to chase Misha out of our house, to lock me up in a room, and to throw out the hectograph.

"How did you dare to bring a hectograph into the house?" she shouted. "You know very well it's prohibited. And what if they searched the house and found this nasty business and all of us were put into prison because of you? What then?"

In the morning, Misha took the hectograph back. I was forbidden to enter his room. But we saved our edition of the "Reply to the Synod" and gave it to father for distribution. He was not angry and only laughed good naturedly over our attempt at revolutionary work.

CHAPTER V

AUNT TANIA

LIKE a clear ray of light, Aunt Tatiana Andreyevna Kuzminskaia went through all my life, from early childhood to the last hard years of revolution, when she was the only person near me at Yasnaia Poliana. When I was little, the Kuzminsky family used to come to Yasnaia Poliana every summer. That meant a merry, noisy time, as their family was almost as large as ours. And Aunt Tania was the first to invent all kinds of pastimes—going for mushrooms, or bathing, or picnicking, or dining at somebody's house, and then inviting them to our home. We used to be a trifle afraid of tall and handsome Alexander Mikhailovich Kuzminsky, auntie's husband and my godfather. But we adored auntie. "Aunt Sonia," "Aunt Tania," rang perpetually through the house. Sometimes we children got the two mixed up and called Aunt Tania "Mother" and my mother "Aunt Sonia."

Auntie loved joy and cheer, and repulsed indignantly all that was distressing. She could not stand quarrels, disagreements, hate—they spoiled her enjoyment, and she always tried to settle them as quickly as she could. No sooner did she discover the quarreling parties than she started making peace and did it with such fervor that she always secured her end. With the children, she used no ceremony whatever. If she found them fighting, she instantly seized them by the collars and knocked their heads together, saying angrily: "Now kiss each other, you bad things, do you hear me? Kiss each other right away, will you?" If this did not work, she gave each a poke in the neck to hasten the peace, and this was so funny that their anger evaporated.

One little picture stands out in my memory. Her youngest son and favorite, Mitichka, had a stomach ache and needed castor oil. "Mitichka," auntie was saying in a tender and imploring voice, holding before him a glass with castor oil, its edges smeared with lemon juice. "Mitichka, dear boy, drink the castor oil."

"No, no, no," Mitichka drawled with a sort of grown-up determination, making a negative gesture with his hand every time he said "no."

"Mitichka," auntie said a little more severely, "drink your castor oil!"

"No, no, no," Mitichka drawled with still greater obstinacy.

"Mitichka!" auntie exclaimed threateningly, "drink your castor oil!"

"No, no, no!" Mitichka now sounded more capricious than sure.

"Yes, yes, yes!" auntie suddenly shouted, giving Mitichka three raps in the back of his neck as she spoke, and with the other hand pouring the castor oil into his mouth. He swallowed, grimaced and choked, and she stuffed in a spoonful of raspberry jam to take away the taste.

Unfortunately, I don't remember Aunt Tania when she was young, but I always associated her in my imagination with Natasha in *War and Peace*.¹ She sang as no one else did. I slept in the nursery, which was separated by two other rooms from the large hall. I would be sent to bed, but I would know that auntie was going to sing, and would wait.

The first chords come—papa or brother Sergei at the piano—my heart pounds. In only my nightgown I steal into the drawing-room next to the hall.

That marvel, not to be forgotten,
When first you stood before my eyes—

She sings the famous song by Glinka with words by Pushkin. I know every note of it. My breath stops, everything around me seems to assume new meaning; something strange is happening within me, I feel new possibilities within myself, a force which grows, swells, presses me.

She has finished. Praise and exclamations seem superfluous; they would break the spell. Now she begins father's favorite song:

When I hear thy voice
Ringing so tenderly,
Like a bird in a cage,
My heart leaps joyfully.
When I meet thy eyes
Deep and blue as the sky,
My soul pleads to leave my breast
Flying to meet their gaze.
Merry and bright I feel,
And yet I wish to weep.
Ah, if only I could
'Round thee throw my arms.²

1. Aunt Tania was, in fact, the prototype of Natasha Rostova in *War and Peace*.

2. Music by Balakirev; words by Lermontov.

"Excellent, excellent," I hear father's voice. "Marvelous!" I stand there in my nightgown, shivering with emotion, and a feeling which I cannot define with words swells higher and higher within me.

Then I recall our lighted ballroom, and mother and auntie, hand in hand, raising their skirts daintily and dancing the old-time polka—one, two, forward; one, two, backward. They separate, then join again, their cheeks and eyes glowing. Auntie is slender and small, mother's appearance is spoiled a little by her enlarged, protruding stomach; but both of them are beautiful at the moment. They finish, flushed and embarrassed but satisfied, and take their seats again, and the rest of us applaud.

More than once I heard father, looking at auntie, so radiant, so glad of living, say to her: "Tania, you know you will die sometime!"

"What nonsense!" she would exclaim indignantly. "Never!"

Father enjoyed this answer immensely, and laughed so that the tears flowed.

Then auntie remained alone. Her children left home one by one; her husband died. In 1917, after the October Revolution, a group of workers broke into his apartment in Petrograd. He rose from his seat and stood before them, erect with all his great height, called out in a loud voice, and fell unconscious. The stroke soon finished him. Aunt Tania came to live at Yasnaia Poliana.³ Through those hard, hungry, terrible years, she stayed there and was my only comfort. Spoiled, accustomed to refuse herself nothing, auntie now chewed slices of feed beets and rejoiced immensely when good luck brought her a piece of meat or cheese. She became thin as a skeleton; I could lift her easily, and, when her heart began to fail, I used to carry her upstairs in my arms. Once in a while, I would get hold of a piece of chocolate or a little coffee at Moscow or Tula and bring it to her, and she was as jubilant as a child. Luckily, I succeeded in getting the Government to grant her a pension of forty rubles a month; out of this, she not only sent some to her son but helped him besides by taking his little boy to Yasnaia Poliana, where she brought up her grandson in the old-fashioned way, giving foremost attention to foreign languages.

In her last years, Aunt Tania wrote the memoirs which have been published in Russian and are now being translated into other languages. She hurried with them, fearing that death would overtake her

3. In 1921, Yasnaia Poliana was nationalized by the Soviet Government, and a museum, a school, and a hospital were started, of which I was director.

before she finished them. Sometimes when I entered her room, she lifted her face from this work and, with her glasses pushed up on her forehead, smiled at me with gleaming eyes; I could see that my coming had just recalled her from another world, one that had disappeared long ago.

"Still writing, auntie? Aren't you very tired?"

"No, no, that's nothing—I may die and never finish it," she replied.

She was now seventy-five years old. On January 12, 1925—the day of St. Tatiana—she wrote to her son that she felt sad: it was her saint's day, but she wouldn't remind anybody of it; there was no money, nothing could be bought, anyway, to celebrate. But we all remembered it perfectly. I left for Tula in the morning and brought back a heap of good things. Cabbage and meat pies were being baked in the kitchen.

"What is it they are doing in the kitchen?" auntie asked the old woman who took care of her.

"Nothing special," the old woman answered, for we had taken her into the secret. "Nikolayevna is cooking the dinner."

In the evening the big hall—now the Museum—usually so bleak, revived once more. A white cloth was spread on the table, the old family samovar of the Tolstoys sputtered and steamed again, candy and flowers, pies, fruit, and even a bottle of port were at one end of the table. At the other end were presents. Every one of the employees⁴ brought something: writing paper, eau de Cologne, coffee, a piece of roast beef, whatever each could hunt up in those lean years. When all had gathered, we went to fetch auntie. We had left the big hall in darkness. "It's strange," she pouted, "they come especially for me, and they don't even light a lamp." At just that moment the hall was lighted. When she saw all of us in our best clothes, the table set and the presents on it, auntie became greatly upset, cried, ran to every one, kissing and thanking each, and then ran back to her room to change into a light-colored dress.

That evening she sang once more. My cousin, Elena Sergeyevna Denisenko, accompanied her. Auntie's voice vibrated, she was unable to reach some of the high notes. She was flushed and agitated. Where the tempo should be accelerated she poked Elena Sergeyevna in the back.

When I hear thy voice,
Ringing so tenderly . . .

4. The teachers, librarians, hospital workers, etc.

I listened and wanted to cry. When she finished, I flung my arms around her neck. "Auntie, darling," I remember saying, "don't die! Only don't die! What am I going to do without you?" "No, no," she comforted me, "of course not."

A few days later, when all had gathered for dinner, auntie came in and sat quietly on the sofa. Suddenly someone said, "What is the matter with Tatiana Andreyevna?" I jumped up. She was sagging slowly to one side. She was carried upstairs; her right hand hung lifeless, her tongue was paralyzed. In a few days she was dead.

As we were carrying her coffin out of the house and tears ran down my cheeks, I suddenly remembered: "Tania, but you will die sometime!" "What nonsense! Never!"

CHAPTER VI

CONFESSON

I WAS fifteen years old when for the first time I came close to father. I consider that time as the beginning of my intimacy with him, which increased as the years went by.

It was the sixth week of Lent. The church bells tolled all over Moscow, the vesper service was just over. I was walking home from the service I had attended in a small church where a beautiful choir of blind girls sang. They sang very well, especially one girl with very blond hair and a sad face. There was such sorrow and yearning in her voice that it even sounded a little weird.

In early youth, we often experience a state of ecstatic emotion, when it seems that one loves everybody, and that one is so very kind and good that all the others cannot help loving you. This was the mood that possessed me as I left the church that evening. I felt light at heart and joyful. Next to me at the service had stood a bent, beggarly little old woman with a shaking head. I did little things for her: fastened her candles before the sacred images, brought her a chair, helped her down the steps. Her black cloak, greenish from wear, smelled moldy, and, as I stood behind her, I noticed big lice crawling in her yellowish-gray hair and on the collar of her cloak. "And though she is so dirty and smells so bad, I love her and am helping her," I thought, feeling more and more deeply touched by my own virtue. "Tomorrow is Friday—I shall go to confession and shall be cleansed of all sins." I tried to remember all that I had to confess to the priest.

I walked quickly along the street, my heels beating a clear rhythm against the sidewalk; and unexpectedly, face to face, I met father. He was walking unhurriedly, with a cane in his hand, wearing a soft gray hat and an unbuttoned overcoat under which showed a white linen blouse.

"Where are you coming from?" he asked me.

"From church." His gray, deep, all-understanding eyes met mine for a minute. His glance made me shivel inside.

"Why are you wearing such a bright red necktie?"

I said nothing. Once more he looked at me attentively, and then went on. "Why are you wearing such a bright red necktie?" I repeated to myself. "Bright red—yes, very bright—not a modest but a

bad necktie." I felt sad; something contracted in my heart. "A bad necktie—and I—am I good? No, bad, bad. Sort of false, insincere—"

I went home deep in thought; my body felt heavy and seemed ugly and uncouth. I loathed myself, yet tried all the time to understand what had happened. No trace was left of the ecstatic, deeply moved, and contented mood which I had just enjoyed. Inwardly I flayed myself, subjecting all my acts and feelings to the severest criticism. "Very well," I said to myself, "and would you give all you possess to that unwashed little old woman? No, never! But if not, then what is the value of your sentimental attentions to her and your touched, virtuous mood?"

Sometimes complicated spiritual processes take place within us, independently of our desires and unknown to us; and the slightest external impulse suffices to change the direction of our thoughts and feelings. Perhaps this was what had happened to me. I could no longer look at things simply, whether it was my own self or anything that surrounded me. I began observing and analyzing.

In this keyed-up mood, I went to church the next day with mother. After a short vesper service, the priest called for those of the congregation who wished to come to confession. Mother and I stood behind all the others. The little old woman of yesterday was directly ahead of us. She was leaning on her cane; she changed her weight from one foot to the other and sighed, and her head trembled more than ever. Evidently she was very tired. The priest came out. The little old woman took a few steps toward him, but the priest walked past all those who were waiting for him and approached mother. "Please come up, Countess," he said to her, bowing respectfully and letting us pass ahead. The little old woman backed up submissively. "And this is a priest, a servant of God!" I thought, and revolt seized me.

During confession, I no longer felt the assurance that the priest had the power to set me free of my sins. I saw in him only an ordinary, sinning human person like anyone else. I resented answering his questions: "Did I curse anybody? Did I tell lies? Was I obedient to my elders?" "What business of his is all this?" I thought, and replied as laconically as I could, "I have sinned, father. Yes, I have sinned."

I came home that evening in a still more confused mood. Here a tragedy awaited me. As I entered my room, I felt at once an unaccustomed stillness. I looked at my bird cage—it was empty. Where was my finch? He was a tame, little bird, used to flying all over my room, and not infrequently started his song while sitting on my head or shoulder. Where was he? I could not find him in the room and went

to ask the maid whether she had seen him. Just then, I heard a crunching sound behind the screen that concealed the maid's bed. On the bed sat a gray cat, Mashka, purring delightedly and finishing the last bits of my finch. Tiny yellow feathers were on the bed covers. I grabbed a stick and, beside myself, began to beat the cat, madly chasing her all over the room. I would have killed her if she had not managed to jump out the window into the street. Rage contracted my throat, my heart thumped. And suddenly I remembered that I had just come from confession. "Nonsense, trifles, all of it!" But I felt even worse and could not stand it any longer. I fell with my face on the pillow and sobbed violently.

The next morning I was attired in a white gown, and mother and I went to Holy Communion. When we entered, the church was already full. We managed with difficulty to make our way forward. The customary long service began. I followed the liturgy with critical attention and caught every word of the priest. His appearances from the altar doors, his motions, his sacramental phrases, the gospel reading which was unintelligible, everything aroused my doubts. "And this is communion," I thought. "Whoever puts more money on the plate gets more wine and sacred bread."

On the Saturday before Palm Sunday, when mother called to me to get ready for vespers, I told her that I was not going. She did not understand me at first.

"Why? Don't you feel well?"

"I'm all right, but I am not going to church any more."

"But why?"

"I don't want to. It is unnecessary, it is all false."

Mother was so shocked that she could find no answer. Both her older daughters had broken away from the church long before, impressed by father's teaching. She had made a special effort to bring up me, her youngest, within the orthodox tenets; she had taken me to church often and hoped that at least one of her daughters would not stray from the true path. When I was very young, she personally taught me the Old Testament and was happy over my good progress. And I was quite amused by the stories of Joseph, David, Goliath, and Jonah, although, even then, I knew that father considered them fairy tales.

Separated from our garden by a high fence was the garden of a clinical hospital for the insane. Sitting on the fence and swinging my legs, I used to engage in religious and philosophic discussions with the inmates.

"Papa says that the Old Testament is all foolishness, and I think that he is right. And he says that one must not eat meat. I don't believe that; I think we may eat as much meat as we like."

The patients listened to me and smiled. "I don't believe in God," one of them told me.

"Oh, no. I believe in God," I replied. Evidently, father's opinions had already reached my childish consciousness in some primitive form, but mother did not suspect it. Now that I refused to go to church, she decided that father had talked with me and influenced me. She went instantly to father's study for an explanation, and they talked for a long time. When she came down, with a rustling of her silk skirt, her cheeks were aflame, and her eyes red from tears. "Father wishes to see you!" she told me. I ran up to him. He was sitting at his round table, in the big leather armchair, with a book in his hands.

"Well, now, why are you causing grief to your mother?" he asked and looked into my eyes sternly and scrutinizingly. And again, as when he had asked me about my red necktie, I felt that he saw everything and understood everything. "Why don't you want to go to church?"

"I can't!" I said, feeling the tears start.

"Don't cry," he said softly, but I could not help it.

"Before abandoning the old," he said, "a person must know for sure whether he has anything new with which to replace it. Have you?"

"I don't know."

"Then why do you hurt your mother's feelings and refuse to go to church with her?"

"It's all lying and falsity there, I cannot!" I cried through the tears that smothered me. Father's face softened still more, his eyes became loving and kind.

"So that's what it is. But don't cry, darling."

When I felt his tenderness, I understood that I must tell him all. And stammering and choking with tears, I told him of the blind singers; of the little old woman; of my virtuous mood, and how it ended; of the priest; and the finch which the cat had eaten. Father seemed very much moved. He no longer sat in his chair, but walked up and down the room, his hands in his belt, and I watched him, catching the expression of his face.

"Just the same—go to church with mother today, won't you?" he asked, and looked at me tenderly and significantly, as though I were a grown person. I understood what his eyes were saying.

"Very well."

He bent down and kissed me on the forehead. His eyes shone cheerfully. I quickly ran downstairs, dressed, and, to mother's surprise, told her that I was going with her to the vesper service. After that day, father was never inaccessible and strange to me.

CHAPTER VII

CRIMEA

IN the summer of 1901, father fell dangerously ill. He had pains in his chest, and, although the fever was comparatively low, his pulse reached 150. The entire family assembled. Mother and Masha took turns nursing him. Doctors Shchurovsky and Bertenson were summoned, and advised father to go to Crimea.

The Countess Sofia Vladimirovna Panina,¹ when she learned of this decision, offered us her estate, Gaspra,² on the southern shore of Crimea. Father was so weak that it was a dangerous undertaking to move him, but one of his followers, Boulanger—who was a railway official—asked his superiors for the use of the railway director's private car, and this was granted. Mother, Masha with her husband, Boulanger, and I accompanied father, and the pianist Goldenweiser, who had insistently sought an occasion for a closer acquaintance with father, joined us at Kharkov. The cook, Semen Nikolayevich; Ilya Vasilievich, the valet; and mother's seamstress, Olga—a young girl—were to follow on another train.

The fast train left Tula about three o'clock in the morning. We drove seventeen versts to the station by team. The darkness was intense and the roads were miry, especially the country lane that led out to the highway. Our groom, Filichka, rode ahead of us with a torch. When we reached the Tula station, father felt so ill from all the strain and fatigue that we began to consider going back home. But Boulanger insisted that this would be madness, that the private car was excellent and comfortable, and that he dreaded the mere thought of another trip by team. He was right. The car was a splendid one: not only did each of us have a separate sleeping compartment and washstand, but there was a beautiful drawing-room with upholstered furniture, a large dining table, and a piano. Father really could rest perfectly in such surroundings.

The next morning, when we passed Kursk and breathed the balmy southern air, father felt better and tried to do some work, but could not. Masha and I looked out at the country and rejoiced at the bright

1. Countess S. V. Panina, a wealthy liberal, was slightly acquainted with our family. Later on, she became very prominent in politics, and was assistant minister of public welfare in Kerensky's cabinet in 1917. She is now an *émigrée*.

2. "Gaspra" means "wind" in Tatar.

white walls of the Ukrainian huts, the Lombardy poplars, and the chalk hills. Father sometimes joined us at the window.

We planned to dine at the station restaurant at Kharkov, but, as the train pulled in, we saw the platform packed with a great throng, mostly students. I realized that an ovation was awaiting father, and was worried. "Greetings, speeches, excitement—his heart will not be able to stand it," the thought kept flashing through my mind. We turned back from the car door—dinner was out of the question. And, true enough, the throng instantly surged up to our car. Father became unusually agitated when he heard that the students had gathered to greet him and were asking him to receive their deputy. He looked as if his whole being contracted, as if he wanted to hide; his face expressed suffering, almost despair. The deputation stood at the window and waited. It was painful to see father's emotion; I wished I could protect him. "They are merely curious," I thought to myself, "and he may pay for it with his life." Masha seemed to share my fear; but mother and Boulanger were caught by the tide of popular feeling and began to urge father to receive the delegation. He consented. He made great efforts to reply to the greetings and good wishes—there was really nothing to speak about. After the first delegation, a second came, and the throng rumbled continuously outside the car windows.

"Ask Lev Nikolayevich to come to the window!" the students shouted. "We implore you—for just one minute!"

"But he cannot—he is not well," we replied from the car.

"For the Lord's sake—for one moment—let him just show himself!" Just before the third bell was to strike for the train to depart, father came to the window. Heads were uncovered. "Hurrah!" the whole throng shouted. "Hurrah!" The train was slowly pulling out. "Tolstoy! Lev Nikolayevich! Good health to you! Happy voyage!" The students pressed close, climbed the lamp posts, ran beside the train, the mob getting gradually thinner until the most stubborn were left behind.

The train flew on. We were all touched to the quick. Father was blowing his nose. But the excitement did not pass without bad results. Father's temperature rose, heart palpitations returned. Not until morning, when we were nearing Sevastopol, did he feel better.

At this station an ovation was again awaiting him, but much more modest than the one at Kharkov. The handful of people who greeted father here seemed to consist mostly of ladies no longer young. We learned later that the exact day of arrival was not known at Sevastopol

so that people had gathered at the station daily for a long time, waiting for Tolstoy to arrive, and a great number had grown tired of it.

We stayed at a fine large hotel on the quay. It was like a holiday to come from the rain and mire of an autumn in central Russia to an enchanting land where a warm sea breeze touched your face and the deep blue of the sky startled the eye as much as the bright colors and deep shadows of the countryside. We all hoped that the south would revive father. Boulanger and I at once hurried to town for provisions and brought back a heap of fragrant, ripe, amber-like grapes, a bundle of Tatar *bubliki*³—smelling of sour dough—and many other good things. Father, too, did not feel like staying indoors. He went for a walk with Boulanger, had a look at the town, dropped into the Sevastopol Museum, and asked many questions about the site of the Fourth Bastion, where he had fought in the Crimean War. Boulanger told us that everybody recognized father in the street, and that one policeman even saluted him, military fashion. But toward evening he was tired out—not so much from his walk as from the memories that rushed upon him at the sight of Sevastopol.

The next morning, we set out for Gaspra in two carriages, changing horses at postal stations. In one carriage, drawn by a four-horse team, were father, mother, Boulanger and I; in the other Masha and her husband and Goldenweiser. Father looked vigilantly around all the time until we were out of the city. "Ah, how everything has changed, how it has changed!" he kept saying sadly. He could not find his bearings in the country and strained his memory trying to recollect where the Fourth Bastion had been. He even asked the coachman about it. Seeing several sailors with their healthy sunburned faces, in their white shirts with blue collars, marching smartly along the street, he said, "Such fine fellows!" and then added, in a low voice, "To think that they, too, are prepared for slaughter!" He began to talk of the horrors of war and wondered at himself that there was a time when he not only took part in a war but even felt inspired by it.

At the Baidar pass, we left the horses behind at the station and went on foot through the famous Baidar Gate. I caught my breath when, from that great height, the view of the sun-bathed and smiling Black Sea opened before us. Mighty cliffs towered on our left, and, in the distance, the water glowed and sparkled. Not only I, who saw the sea for the first time in my life, but all of us were deeply moved. Father sat on a stone and gazed silently before him.

3. A kind of large, soft pretzel of plain white dough which only the Turks and Tatars know how to make.

But we had to go back to the station to attend to father's dinner, to escape being on our way during sunset—the dangerous hour in Crimea—when the temperature drops sharply. Next to the inn, we found a place with a kitchen stove on which we quickly heated and cooked the dinner. We spent about an hour at the station, ate quickly, and went on into that land of which we had had a glimpse from the Baidar Gate. Everything was new to me: the Tatar villages with no end of tiny stores and the smell of dried dung and sheep tallow, the little Tatar lads in round astrakhan caps, the women with dyed fingernails and faces veiled by embroidered scarfs; the huge rocks that overhung the road—but chiefly the sea, the sea!

We arrived at Gaspra late in the evening. From the upper highway, we turned off to the right, through a gate, and drove up a crunching gravel path to a splendid palace. Countess Panina's servants met us with the estate manager, a German, Karl Christianovich Klassen, at the head, carrying bread and salt. I was disagreeably startled by the luxury inside the mansion. I had never lived in such a place before. Everything seemed awkward and somber: the marble window sills, the carved doors, the heavy, expensive furniture, the great high-ceilinged rooms. But when we went out on the upper verandah and the view of the sea opened before us, we were delighted. The lower verandah was beautiful, too, wound around with grape vines, with big, ripe clusters of Isabella grapes hanging down through the poles.

The next day our servants came on the steamer. Although the sea was calm, all three were seasick; fat Semen Nikolayevich was the chief sufferer—he even wept.

Life was fine at first in Crimea. Father's health went on improving, and he resumed work, planning his day's schedule exactly as at Yasnaia Poliana except that he rose and went to bed at earlier hours. Masha did copying for him, but she was planning to go to Yalta to attend to her own health and was worried because nobody could substitute for her.

"Well, Sasha, you are grown up now," she said one day (I was about seventeen then), "it is time you began copying for father."

She brought me some sheets of paper in his handwriting. It was evening. I was elated, I was going to prove that I could do an excellent job. I went to my room and prepared clean paper by folding it to copybook size, cutting it, and creasing the right-hand side to leave a margin. Then I put a fresh pen into the penholder and opened the manuscript. How well I remember its look! It was several quarter-sheets, written lengthwise and crosswise, with crossed-out passages,

inserts between lines, in the margins, on the reverse, unfinished words. The appearance of the first manuscript I copied so absorbed my attention that I cannot tell now what its contents were; I remember only that it was an article on religion. Gradually, my enthusiasm gave place to despair. Hour after hour slipped by. The night set in. I wrote a few words at a time and then tried to decipher words, but even the letters became blurred. I began to guess, but the result was nonsense. Presently, I no longer saw anything but dots before me; the lines faded into one another. I tried to lay the work aside for a while and then to look at it and "catch it on the wing," but that did not help.

The clean copy was supposed to be on father's desk by eight o'clock in the morning, but the next day I had on my hands such a wretched piece of work that I dreaded to take it in to him. There were blanks on every page, words were left unfinished, the lines dropped down or climbed up at will, the letters were too tall and sharp, very little space was left between the lines for corrections. When I took the copy in and showed it to father, he laughed and put it aside, and I left his study in a profound depression, fully conscious of the fact that I was no good, that I was never going to learn to help him. How I envied Masha, who worked with such assurance, writing with her little, round characters everly and smoothly as if she were printing! And how well she read father's handwriting! Several weeks passed before I understood that I must not pore over single undecipherable letters but rather try to catch the general meaning of a sentence, and that then single words and letters would become clear. But long and stubborn work was required before I reached that stage. Then, little by little, I became familiar with the work. It filled my life, and I no longer felt a useless being.

That summer many writers visited father, among others Chekhov and Gorky. Anton Pavlovich Chekhov had visited father before in Moscow, but I saw him for the first time when he came to us in Crimea. He walked with a cane, was slightly bent, shy and serious. He had a short, constant, muffled cough, and was obviously quite ill. There was high color on his sunken cheeks, either from excitement or from fever. He sat with father on the downstairs verandah and, so far as I remember, their conversation was about literature. I know that father esteemed Chekhov, and it may be that among the younger writers he was most at ease with him. He felt able to tell him frankly and straightforwardly what he thought of his writings—knowing that Chekhov would not be offended and would understand him. It was either at this time or during a subsequent visit that father tried



Chekhov and Tolstoy



Tolstoy and Gorky

to persuade Chekhov not to write dramas and expressed his admiration for his short stories. Father was sick and was lying in bed. In a moment of frankness and very warm feeling toward Chekhov, he embraced him and whispered in his ear, "Please, my dear man, I beg of you, don't write any more dramas!" He was always sorry that Chekhov had no serious conception of life. "Is it worth while writing," father used to ask, "if you have no deep ideas of your own? Yet I must say that Chekhov is very talented. And sometimes, in his short stories, you can see that his artistic feeling makes him sense the truth more than his reasoning power would have done."

Gorky lived with his wife and son about a mile from Gaspra, near the sea, and used to come to see us. He was banished from central Russia and lived in Crimea because of his weak lungs. He always seemed alien to me, and father could never be his real self with him. Nor was Gorky himself—he was confused and timid in father's presence, and his usual somewhat rough tone disappeared. Father acknowledged that he felt ill at ease with the young writers because he thought that they did not deserve the fame they had attained. He admitted that Gorky's chief merit was in making people understand and sympathize with the poor—with barefoot tramps—but he did not like Gorky's style and said that sometimes his writing suffered from lack of measure and was false.

Only once did I see father merry and natural with Gorky. That was later on, at Yasnaia Poliana. We were all sitting around the tea table, with the samovar boiling. Gorky was talking about birds, describing the different kinds, their habits, and songs. Leaning forward in his armchair toward Gorky, father smiled and did not miss a word. It seemed to me that I had never understood anything about birds before. I am sure that at this moment, while listening to the story of how Gorky earned his living by catching and selling birds in his boyhood, father felt the great artist in him.

That was always true of father. A famous novel, a drama that had had enormous success, would leave him quite indifferent; while a plain little story about birds would make a deep impression on him. I shall never forget Shaliapin's first visit with us in Moscow. He sang all the evening, and everyone in the house was fascinated by his voice and his way of singing. But when father was asked by someone in the family how he liked it he said: "It made no impression on me at all." No one agreed with him; mother said she could not believe it and that father merely wanted to be original, but father again repeated that Shaliapin's singing did not please him.

The estate of Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich was in the vicinity of Gaspra. Its gates were guarded by sentinels and no strangers were allowed to enter. A different world seemed to exist beyond those walls, and the grand dukes were, to our imagination, inaccessible and alien beings. What was not our surprise when Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich inquired if he might see father. Father agreed and their interview took place *tête-à-tête*. The Grand Duke made a better impression than father had thought he would.

"Strange," father said afterward, "what does he expect of me? He told me of his personal life and asked permission to come again. But he is a simple, unpretentious man and seems intelligent."

Several years later, father handed me for safe keeping some papers which the Grand Duke had given him and told me that Nikolai Mikhailovich had consulted him concerning his love for a certain lady. But among other things, the Grand Duke, in the course of his conversation, inquired if he could be helpful in any way and asked father not to hesitate to take walks on his estate. He said that he would give the necessary instructions to his servants, and personally showed father the way to his park by a footpath that led to a place back of the Gaspra park where the wall could be climbed. After that, father often walked in the Grand Duke's estate. The remarkable "Tsar's trail" started from it—the "horizontal trail" as father called it—on which it was possible to walk all the way into Yalta practically without climbing any hills.

Sometimes father walked down to the sea. That was easy, but climbing back uphill was very bad for his heart. Mother kept a hired carriage and horses, with a coachman, but father would never consent to use it and preferred to walk. Once in a great while he rode horseback, using the old gray mare of Karl Christianovich. He frequently over-tired his heart climbing hills, and in general his outings were a constant source of worry for mother, who detested Crimea, found it tedious, and blamed it for anything that happened to go wrong.

The relations between B—— and myself were strange. He was some twenty years my senior and was almost a Tolstoyan; something prevented me from calling him a real one. He was not averse to a drink of wine or a card party. With me, he behaved like a youth—rode horseback, was the first one to think up excursions, and made amusing remarks. I was thankful to him because he did his best to help me come nearer to father, assisted me with the copying, and taught me many things. I became used to him and trusted him.

One day, I overheard a conversation of father's with my sister-in-law Olga, which darkened my spirits for a little while, although I soon forgot all about it.

"Did you notice?" father asked, pointing in the direction of B—.

"Yes," she answered meaningly.

"To think," father said, "that such a serious man, no longer young, has weakened so!"

During one of B—'s visits, we went for an outing as usual. We took a lunch of *bubliki* and grapes, and walked to Alupka. After rambling through the park for a long time, we came to the so-called "Chaos," where heaps of huge gray rocks were piled by nature in monstrous disorder. Then we started home by the shore. Climbing up to Gaspra without any paths, we had to catch our breath and sat down in a clearing. It was hot. The grass had been burned by the sun, and the soil seemed impregnated with sunshine. The fragrance of that little plant of the Crimean hills, "the herb of the Mother of God," hung in the air. I lay on the ground and examined the tiny blue blossoms. Suddenly I felt awkward, without knowing the reason. I raised my head and met B—'s eyes. He was looking at me in a strange and unusual manner. His eyes seemed turbid. I jumped to my feet.

"Where are you going?" he called after me. "Wait, for the Lord's sake, I must tell you—"

"No, no, it isn't necessary," I replied as I fled, hurrying up the hill-side without looking back. The little rocks clattered behind me as they rolled down from under my feet and I heard B—'s labored breath. Like myself, he ran all the way to Gaspra. When I reached the opening before the verandah, I came on father, who was having lunch.

"What is the matter with you? Why are you gasping so?" he asked.

"Walked too fast," I said, and ran to my room. From that day my relations with B— were spoiled. The former simplicity and clarity were gone.

Masha went away to live for a few months at Yalta. Tania came to stay with us with her husband and two stepchildren, Natasha and Dorik. They lived in one of the wings. Tania was expecting a baby, and this time, as before, it was born dead. We were all grieved. Father tenderly tried to comfort her. The lives of my sisters, their joys and sorrows, were as near to his heart as they had been before; and, as of old, their presence alleviated his loneliness.

At that time, I was not yet very sure how I should approach father.

This was due partly to my own shyness and partly to the fact that there were many things to occupy the attention of a seventeen-year-old girl: horseback riding, theatricals, music, and rowing. As to all the things which filled father's life, they affected me only superficially at that time. The essence of his world outlook remained as yet far from my understanding. I had just read *War and Peace*, which father had asked me not to read until I was seventeen, and this was an event in my life. I read and reread it and found it easier to understand than the article "Concerning Religion," which he was writing just then.

I was as yet impressed only by certain particular things in father's activity, such as his moves against the Church and the Government. When I read his second letter to the Tsar, I dreamed of how the Tsar would receive it, would call father to him and speak with him, and how, after that, everything in Russia would change. I had no doubt that the Tsar would understand the things of which father wrote so forcefully and so boldly—I only wondered whether the letter would actually reach the Sovereign.

Father wrote:

I should not wish to die without telling you what I think of your present activity, of what it might be, what good it might bring to millions of people and to yourself, and what evil it can bring to people and to yourself if it continues in the same direction as now. . . . Autocracy is an outlived form of government, which may suit the requirements of a people somewhere in central Africa, far removed from the rest of the world, but not the requirements of the Russian people, who increasingly participate in the enlightenment common to the whole world; therefore it is only possible to uphold this form of government by means of all manner of violence, reinforced guard, exile by police decree, executions, religious persecutions, censorship of books and newspapers, perversion of education, and, in general, by all sorts of evil acts.

These have been the fruits of your reign so far: beginning with your answer to the deputation from Tver, when you applied the name of "senseless dreams" to the people's most legitimate wishes; all of your orders concerning Finland; the encroachments in China; your plan for The Hague Conference, accompanied by an increase in armaments; the weakening of self-government and the strengthening of arbitrary police rule; the support you have given to persecutions of people for their religion; your consent to the establishment of the alcohol monopoly, that is, to the Government's trading in poison that ruins the people; and finally your obstinacy in keeping in force corporal punishment, in disregard of all the representations that have been made to you with respect to abolishing this blot on the Russian people, this senseless and wholly ineffective measure.

All these are acts which you could not have committed unless you decided not only to keep the life of the people from developing, but to force it back into a state it has long outgrown.

It is possible to oppress a people by violence, but not to govern it. . . .

Father asked Grand Duke Nikolai Mikhailovich to transmit the letter to the Tsar. That Nikolai Mikhailovich was willing to do so, risking the displeasure of the Sovereign, proved his friendly feeling for father. The Tsar received the letter but it made no impression whatsoever on him; and, on February 8, father, being quite ill at the time, dictated the following thoughts:

There are only two ways out of the oppressive and threatening situation in which we now find ourselves: one, though a very difficult one, is a bloody revolution; the second is a recognition by the Government of its obligation not to go against progress, not to defend the old—but to understand the direction in which humanity is moving and to lead the people in that direction. I have tried to point out that way in my two letters to Nicholas II.

It was clear that the police were watching us. One evening in Yalta, several of us went to the quay for a walk. We noticed a man emerge from a group of cypresses in the courtyard and walk on the other side of the street in the same direction. We walked faster, and so did he; we turned off to the market place and he followed us. We ran out upon the mole, and he was still behind us. We sat down on a bench and gazed at the sea, trying to forget about our pursuer, but when we went back he was ahead of us.

"Wait," I exclaimed, "don't let him get away."

And a chase began in which the parts became reversed. The spy slowed down—and so did we. He began to walk very fast, and we kept pace with him. He crossed back to the quay and there were we; into an alley and we were still behind him. He sat down on a street bench and we quietly sat down with him. We tracked him until he was in despair. When at last we reached the old market place, the victim dived precipitately into an unpleasant-looking inn; we thought we had better not go in and we went home laughing. Whether it was because this occurrence became the talk of the town or for some other reason, I cannot be certain; but we no longer saw spies around us. It may be, of course, that they assigned cleverer ones to watch us.

In the middle of January, father fell ill again. First the court physician, Bertenson, came from Petrograd; then came one of the best Moscow physicians, Dr. Shchurovsky. From Yalta, Doctors Altschuler

and Elpatievsky came, and the physician of the local zemstvo, Volkov, called often. Father had a pain in one side. For several days the physicians hesitated as to the precise diagnosis. At first they found pleurisy, then pneumonia. This time, father was not to leave his bed again for nearly four months. That an old man in his eighth decade, with a heart weakened by recent illness and fever, was able to survive pleurisy, pneumonia, and then, with hardly any intermission, intestinal typhus, was the greatest miracle. But all those four months we lived only by our faith in a miracle.

My brothers and their wives came and went. Masha with her husband came again to live at Gaspra. Every night, two of us were on duty at father's bedside. Mother's shift was every night until four in the morning, when Tania and I took her place. Masha, herself weak and ill but nevertheless the most skilful nurse of us all, was on duty in the morning or in the daytime. To her, he dictated his thoughts; with her, he spoke of what was the most important thing to him—death, for which he was preparing.

But people and physicians around him interfered with the spiritual process that was taking place in him and which he considered more important than recovery. It was about this time that the note "I.I.L."—"If I Live"—began to recur increasingly often in father's diary. As he began a new day, he considered it necessary to bear in mind that life does not depend on our will, that any hour, any minute, we may die. He disliked very much to hear people make plans for the future.

"Oh, my Lord, how is it possible? How can you? What if you die tomorrow? How can you guess at the future when the present alone is in your power, when you don't even know what will happen to you tonight?"

One day father wrote in his diary:

January 23, Gaspra. 1902, I.I.L. Am weak still. Bertenson came. Nothing important, of course. Wonderful verse:

Now the dear old man has begun to groan;
Now the dear old man has begun to cough.
It is time for the dear old man to get under his shroud,
Under his shroud and into his grave.

But could we others, young and full of life, and animated in those days with the sole thought of saving father from death, understand his mood? Of course not. I think that even Masha was more frightened than content at father's readiness for death and his constant reminders of it. We were the ones who needed those physicians, their advice,

their heartening remarks, perhaps even the medicine which we, like so many priests performing holy rites, dropped carefully from bottle to glass, all the poultices, hot jars, mustard plasters, enemas. Father sometimes waved us aside and sometimes indulgently let us do all these things, unnecessary from his own point of view, so long as we did not interfere with the principal thing.

It is time for the dear old man to get under his shroud.
Under his shroud and into his grave,

he repeated with a feeble smile.

During father's grave illness, my eldest brother, Sergei, drew closer to him than most of us. With self-forgetful tenderness this clumsy, somber-looking man took care of father, lifted him up like a child, carried him from one place to another, put on compresses, watched for his every sigh and divined his feelings and wishes.

Father noticed everything and had consideration and pity for everyone. The thought tormented him that mother stayed on duty every night until four o'clock. As a rule, I tried to make my turn a half hour before mother's was supposed to end.

"You are too early," mother would say.

"Really? Oh, my watch must be fast," I tried to justify myself.

"Go, Sonia, please go, you are so tired!" father pleaded. And mother went, after telling me what there was to do, what medicine to give at a certain hour, and so on.

Nikolai Nikolayevich Gay, Jr.—Kolichka—who was visiting us, also had his regular watch at father's bedside and slept in a neighboring room. Once, in the dead of the night, I heard father calling me gently. He had been sleepless, groaned and coughed a little and finally made up his mind to call me.

"Sasha!" he said when I came, "give a little knock on that door softly!" I heard him but could not understand just what he wanted. "Oh, Lord," he said in a discontented voice, "can't you understand? Kolichka is snoring. If you knock softly, he may simply turn over on the other side and stop it."

"Oh, I'll wake him up right away," said I, thinking at the same time in what despair Kolichka would be when he learned that father could not sleep because of his snoring.

"Oh, no, no, what are you talking about?" father exclaimed in a startled voice. "Why should you wake him up? Do what I tell you."

I knocked very softly, then a little louder, but it had no effect on

Kolichka, who continued to snore just as powerfully and unashamedly, with a nasty little whistling refrain.

"Nothing doing," father said in a melancholy voice. "Let him sleep."

After waiting a few seconds, I stole out of the room, walked through the other rooms into Kolichka's and gave him such a shake that he jumped up on his bed, frightened, tousle-headed, and sleepy.

"What has happened?"

"Nothing—you're snoring, and father cannot sleep."

"Oh—is that really true, Sasha?" Kolichka was greatly chagrined and, of course, did not sleep the rest of the night.

Another morning, I walked into father's room when he had just awakened and, with Boulanger's help, was making his toilet. He had asked Boulanger to stuff the fine comb with cotton and comb his hair. But it simply wouldn't work. Boulanger struggled vigorously with the comb, trying to pull the cotton through its fine teeth, but the cotton would not obey and tore into tiny flakes.

"Ah," father was saying with slight annoyance, "why can't you stuff a comb with cotton? Don't you ever use a fine comb?"

"No, Lev Nikolayevich, never," replied Boulanger—who was quite bald.

"Alexandra Lvovna!" he exclaimed, when I came in. "Help me, for the Lord's sake. Do you know how to stuff a fine comb with cotton?"

"Of course I do. Let me do it, I'll comb and wash him myself."

Father had fine, fleecy hair; on the back of his head it was as fluffy as a child's. It had to be combed and then the beard brushed. This was a task that frightened me; the slightest wrong movement caused father pain, and the beard was a big one, curly and matted. Then his hands had to be washed with soap, and his face and neck with water to which a little *eau de Cologne* was added to refresh him.

A catarrhal pneumonia is one of the most exhausting illnesses. One point of inflammation dissolves, but in a few hours fever rises again, another point becomes inflamed, and so it drags on for weeks and months. Father coughed and choked; sometimes he was unable to lie flat, and we put pillows behind his back to make it easier for him to breathe. At times, he suffered greatly, moaned, suffocated, and for long minutes lay as if in a coma. His whole body ached and he was so emaciated that it was a fearful sight. Some nights his feet began to ache. "Rub them a little, please," he would say. I would rub his feet and feel under my fingers the sharp bones and flabby muscles—so flabby that they seemed empty.

We gave the doctors no peace. "Tell us—is that focus dissolving? What size is it, like a five-kopeck piece or larger?" They made drawings, explained, encouraged.

Then came the most dreadful night of all. In the somber dining-room of the Gaspra mansion, I sat with Doctors Shchurovsky, Altschuler, and Volkov. Mother and Masha were with father. Shchurovsky and Altschuler rose every little while, went into the sick room and came back. Shchurovsky's face, usually hopeful, was now worried and gloomy. From time to time, the doctors exchanged a sentence or two, the sense of which I did not catch.

"Vladimir Andreyevich," I said to Shchurovsky, "tell me, I implore you, is there hope?"

"None," he said. But after a look at my face, he added: "Of a hundred chances there is one that he may live." He rose and went out. Volkov affectionately touched my sleeve.

"Alexandra Lvovna—I have no right, as a physician, to say it to you—I will speak only as a man. I feel with my whole soul that Lev Nikolayevich will recover—you will see!"

Nobody slept that night. The physicians never left father's bedside. There were minutes when his pulse could scarcely be detected. Father was as calm as before, but his physical sufferings were intense. That same night my sister-in-law, Olga, gave birth to a dead child.

Toward morning, father dozed off. The crisis was passed—the modest zemstvo physician was right. From that morning, if ever so slowly, father's condition began to improve. He felt a little better every day. The inflammation gradually subsided and on warm days he went out on the verandah and sat in an arm chair in the sunshine. But he was still scarcely able to walk and moved painfully from place to place with the help of a cane.

One day, Boulanger returned. He always cheered the family up. Father, the Obolenskys, and even mother, who as a rule looked askance at Tolstoyans, all liked him. A wonderful, quiet, warm day came. Father, Boulanger, and I drove down to the seashore. I believe that this was father's first real outing after his illness. Turkish sail-boats stood at the shore. "Lev Nikolayevich," Boulanger exclaimed with sudden joy, "let's go for a sail! Will you?" I thought that Boulanger had lost his mind. But the idea appealed to father. Two robust, slender Turks lifted father up, carried him to the deck, and laid him upon a Turkish rug. Quickly and adroitly scrambling over the edges of the boat, they set the sails. The sails gathered wind and the

felucca, listing slightly, flew out into the blue sea, leaving a smooth, brilliant path on the surface. Not far from us, small schools of dolphins slowly turned their somersaults.

"How wonderful, how wonderful," father kept saying. We sped away from the shore until we could scarcely make out the houses, the round, gray turrets of "our" palace, and the clumsy, white palace of Dulber. "Well," Boulanger said, as we were nearing the shore again, "now I might just as well not show myself to Sofia Andreyevna. What won't she do to me!" We wanted to keep our little adventure secret but, of course, gave ourselves away—all three of us itched with the desire to talk of the wonderful sail we had had.

On warm, sunny days, we wheeled father about in a chair, and one day he asked Ilya Vasilievich and me to wheel him down to the park. The heavy chair rolled down by itself; one of us held on to the back, the other supported it in front, but at times it bore down so heavily that it did not seem possible to stop it and we virtually rode on the soles of our shoes over the gravel path. "Courage—courage," father said, "what are you afraid of?"

Another time, Boulanger had the idea of wheeling him out to "the horizontal path," at which father was delighted. But to get to that path, the wheel chair had first to be let down a very steep grade. Boulanger was not as strong as Ilya Vasilievich. I actually lay down under the wheels of the chair at times, trying to break its momentum. When we finally reached the horizontal path, father asked, with great surprise, "Why are you so hot?" But we got our reward. Father smiled and joked and admired the scenery.

In view of father's frequent sickness, it was decided to have a permanent house physician. A former assistant of Professor Ostroumov came, an earnest and attentive doctor, Dmitri Vasilievich Nikitin, who at once won not only our confidence but the affection of the whole family.

But this time too, we were not destined to rejoice long over father's recovery. After Tania and my brothers had started homeward and mother had gone away to Moscow to see about financial affairs and to hear some music, father fell ill with intestinal typhus. Telegrams flew in all directions; again the family gathered, again physicians were summoned and watches assigned. Father was carried upstairs into a large sunny room next to mine. He suffered from diarrhea and pains in the abdomen. And again our whole life became concentrated on when and how to give an enema, on being sure that the correct

number of drops was put into the glass, on making the patient more comfortable; and again the dreadful sleepless nights began.

This time I did not take care of him long; I fell ill myself. I had high fever and pains in my stomach. Some of the physicians diagnosed appendicitis, others typhus. I was delirious. Tania, Masha, Seriozha, and mother came and went. When I recovered my senses, father was much better; his temperature was decreasing.

"This accursed Crimea," mother said. "We should have stayed right there at Yasnaia, and nothing would have happened. It will be a miracle if all of us leave this place alive. Lev Nikolayevich has been sick for four months, now Sasha is ill, we've got to go quickly." We only waited for father to be strong enough to travel.

One day, a big company of curious people came from Yalta. They begged us to ask Lev Nikolayevich to show himself. Mother would not consent, saying that father was very weak and was not going out at all. "Oh, but just let him come to the window," they implored. "Just let us see him." They begged so long and so insistently that father finally consented to have his wheel chair moved to the window. "Good day, good day," he said in a low, feeble voice. As usual, in similar cases, he felt awkward and dismayed. All were silent. But suddenly a fat, short lady looking like one of those little consecrated church breads, elbowed her way to the front of the crowd:

"Dear Lev Nikolayevich, I am so happy, I was in such raptures reading your *Fathers and Sons!*"⁴

"*Childhood and Adolescence, Childhood and Adolescence,*" the others tried to correct her in whispers from behind her back.

"Oh, don't interfere please, isn't it the same thing?" the lady retorted with temper, all hot and red with excitement. "What difference does it make? I read *Childhood and Adolescence*, too, of course. Dear Lev Nikolayevich, our beloved." The others shoved the lady off into the background.

It was not until the middle of June that we started back to Yasnaia Poliana. Brother Sergei, Doctor Nikitin, and Boulanger traveled with us. I was still very weak and had fever. Brother Sergei carried me in his arms down the winding staircase and set me down in the carriage. My head buzzed. I remember faintly the curious crowds that gazed at father and the people who were seeing us off.

Very weak and emaciated, father came into my compartment in the train and sat down at my feet. There was tenderness in his eyes.

4. One of Turgenev's novels.

"Do you need anything?" he asked. And it seemed so strange that I, always so healthy and strong, was lying down, unable to jump up, to run and get something for him; while he, so feeble, so thin, was doing something for me.

CHAPTER VIII

MOTHER AND FATHER

FATHER'S health improved visibly, yet we constantly feared for him. If he was ever so slightly under the weather or had indigestion or any difficulty in breathing, we thought it the beginning of a new illness. We snatched at his wrist to count his pulse; he tried to wave us aside, laughed at us, but, on the whole, patiently let us have our way. Familiar living conditions obviously had an excellent effect on his health. Doctors Shchurovsky and Usov, who came from Moscow with Doctor Nikitin, declared that nothing better could be desired and that father should remain at Yasnaia Poliana, though they advised him to take up quarters on the second floor. From his room "under the vault," father moved into two bright rooms upstairs next to the drawing-room, on the sunny side of the house. In one of them, his bedroom was arranged; in the other, his study.

He gained strength little by little, gradually increased the length of his walks and tried to resume gymnastics. I remember the day when he went riding for the first time after his illness, on the new horse "Délire," which I had just bought. He raised his left foot to the stirrup with difficulty, and with a visible effort swung his body into the saddle; the horse pranced impatiently and father disappeared from sight toward the gates. I wandered about restlessly, worrying lest his strength should not be adequate to subdue a young, temperamental horse.

"I have been to Kozlovka!" he called out to me merrily, as he trotted back to the house.

No sooner did I see him than I understood that my worries were unjustified. Délire walked quietly and evenly. He looked as though father had been riding him for a long time.

"A good horse, your Délire," father said, "wise and quiet, and spirited at the same time."

From that day I stopped riding Délire, and father became attached to him and rode him until his last days at home.

It seemed to me that father's characteristic rejoicing in life, flowers, trees, children, and all that surrounded him, became more intense after his illness. I can still see him returning from a walk in the woods: the white blouse hangs like a sack on his thin body, its collar

stands off his neck, the collar bones protrude; he walks without a hat and his fluffy gray hair moves in the breeze.

"Here, look what I have brought!" he says, smiling. I peep into the hat: inside of it are several mushrooms, carefully laid upon a big leaf.

"Just smell, smell them—what a fragrance!"

It may be that the joy of returning to life caused a return of the desire for artistic creation. Father began to write *Hadji Murat*. Sister Masha, who at that time often came to see us, and I were elated by this but tried not to show our feelings to father lest we disturb his mood. We waited impatiently for every new chapter to come from his pen. I felt offended because Masha and Kolia, her husband, seldom gave me the manuscript pages to copy and did most of the copying themselves.

But father could not be satisfied with artistic work alone. He completed the article "To the Clergy," and began a piece of semiliterary character—"Restoration of Hell"—which called forth mother's great indignation.

"Lev Nikolayevich wrote a beautiful thing in *Hadji Murat*," she kept saying, "and now he is at this hateful, odious stuff again—why?—devils, hell, all sorts of nastiness—revolting!"

I could not agree with mother. All that father wrote seemed beautiful to me; in my mind it was divided only into things more interesting and less interesting. Sometimes the things which increasingly commanded his interest were less interesting to me. This distressed me, and I flayed myself for thinking so.

At that period, father was studying philosophy and religion, selecting from all the creeds the points that suited his own convictions. "In what beautiful company I have spent this evening," he told us after reading Kant, Schopenhauer, and Montaigne.

He shaped his own circle of reading—books which gave him spiritual food; and the thought began to occupy him more and more often how to make this selected reading more accessible to the masses. Some mornings, as he tore off the daily leaf of his calendar, he was revolted at the tawdry and haphazard selection of the sayings printed on the reverse. This was perhaps what suggested to him the thought of composing something like a calendar of sayings: *Thoughts of Wise People*. He searched for these thoughts as for precious stones in the mass of books that surrounded him, stringing them one by one into a harmonious chain. This book was the first of a number of volumes

of selected sayings called the *Cycle of Reading*, which occupied father to the end of his life.

How delighted he was when Ivan Ivanovich Gorbunov sent him the first limited edition copies of the *Thoughts of Wise People!* He could not feast his eyes on them enough, showed them to everybody, read them aloud. I do not remember that any other book ever gave him such pleasure. Sometimes he opened a page at random, and said, before looking at it, "Well, Sasha, this one will be for you!" and was glad if the sayings seemed appropriate.

While father incessantly found new interests, and often said that his lifetime would never suffice for all that he wanted to do, mother, on the contrary, languished. She wrote of herself in her notebook: "I live without a life." All that moved father so deeply was alien to her; his new passion—the collections of wise thoughts—did not interest her, although she herself liked to quote two or three sayings by Seneca and Spinoza.

Nevertheless, she kept busy all the time. When too many books that had been sent to father by authors or publishers accumulated in the big hall, mother and Julia Ivanovna sorted them, put them away in bookcases, listed them in the catalogue which mother kept, and arranged them on the shelves. She gathered newspaper clippings and pasted them in special books; sometimes she feverishly devoted herself to photography, and developed and printed the films herself, which made her fingers gray-green. (Generally speaking, in the matter of preserving various relics, manuscripts, and books, mother accomplished a very big task. Her notebooks—with daily entries—and the catalogues she kept, represent very valuable material for investigators.)

Sometimes, not knowing where to apply the energy that she felt accumulating in her and despite the fact that there was a gardener especially for this work and that there were always dozens of day laborers around the house, she gathered rubbish, cigarette stubs, and bits of paper in the garden and burned them. A complete set of garden tools was in her room: an English spade, a scythe and emery bar, a rake, a hammer, nails, shears, a small saw. In the summer, when nettles grew up boisterously around the house, mother cut them down herself; and in the spring and autumn, she cut out the dry twigs in the lilac and acacias. She liked to paint washstands and garden furniture.

Mother's store of energy was tremendous. She could not bear to remain inactive. For a time she spent whole days learning to type.

Then just as suddenly she became a devotee of painting and made copies of portraits of our ancestors or of father, then began to paint a portrait of me. Painting then ceded its place to writing. The magazine *Zhizn Dlia Vsekh* printed a prose-poem of hers called "Wailing."

But her foremost passion was music. Besides playing scales and Hanon's exercises for hours at a time, she tried to study and play the things which Taneyev played in his concerts—Beethoven, Mozart, Mendelssohn. She played the pieces from beginning to end an infinite number of times, invariably making the same mistakes, pounding loudly upon the keys with her stiffened fingers. No matter who the guest was who came to our house, he was very soon asked to play duets on the piano with her. Often the virtues of the guest were estimated in direct proportion to his ability to play the piano.

A young lady from Tula, Nadichka Ivanova, used to visit us. She was the daughter of a tradesman, one who, having tasted education, grasped indiscriminately at anything she found handy: newspapers, magazines, philosophy, socialism. Finally, Nadichka found her true vocation. Although she had no talent whatsoever, and only a mediocre ear, Nadichka devoted herself to music. She bought a grand piano, spent money on music teachers, for several years hopefully drummed the keys, and finally became a piano teacher.

From the big hall came loud sounds of what should have been Haydn, Mozart, Brahms. With fervor, for whole evenings at a time, pitilessly stepping on the right pedal, mother and Nadia played duets. Sometimes Nadia's place was taken by Tania's stepdaughter, Natasha. The players often lost track of one another and played a number of measures each for herself, finding it out at the end of the page. I went to my far-off corner room to do copying and thought with anguish that father was doomed to listen to those concerts for hours.

It was mother's conviction that her principal task in life was to take care of father. Suffering from the inner discord between him and herself, she emphasized the external care for his well-being. She was proud of the cap she had knitted for him, the blouse which she had neatly cut and sewn for him with her own hands. Thus she comforted herself, failing to understand that no care could atone for father's moral suffering. She sincerely believed that father would be lost if she did not pour some meat broth into his vegetable soup when he felt weak, if she did not stay regularly on duty at his bedside during his illness, if she did not devote so much thought to the matters of his clothing and food.



Count and Countess Tolstoy

"Liovochka, don't drink so much *kvas*," she would say, pushing the pitcher with the cooling beverage away from him. "You will again be poisoned by intestinal toxins."

"Liovochka, put on a warm coat today, will you please, it is very cold."

Sometimes, with her characteristic energy, mother suddenly devoted herself to estate management. But she did not understand it and could not do it efficiently. Her attention was never turned to essentials, always to details. Village women carrying grass across the yard, peasants pulling dry trees from the forest, dirt and disorder around the house angered her. But she failed to notice the prevailing general disorder of the whole estate, the bad management and thievery of the steward.

One horrible accident occurred due to mismanagement. From time immemorial sand for all needs was taken from the so-called Sand Pit—a hillock half a verst from our house where there were strata of fine sand and clay. I heard people say that, during father's management, there were regular quarries there from which sand or clay could be taken out easily and safely. But the steward no longer took care of that, although peasants were charged ten kopecks for a load of sand. The pits were worked at random.

And then one day, under the eyes of our alderman, the sand buried a peasant alive. He had dug in too deep, the edges of the hole began to crumble, and the sand poured down on his feet and legs, fastening him to the bottom. He cried for help; when his son and the alderman came running, the sand was already up to his waist. They wanted to throw a rope end to him but felt the sand give way and jumped aside. They saw the sand gradually bury the man, till the place became even.

"He could not be seen any more, and still we heard him cry under the sand," the alderman said later.

People ran to our house to tell about the misfortune. All ran to the Sand Pit. I seldom saw father so upset. He dug for the man, together with the other workers.

"Such things can't happen, they can't happen," he was telling mother. "If you want to have an estate, you must manage it well or else give it up altogether."

This was the only time that I remember father taking an active part in estate matters. He hired diggers, showed them how to open a quarry and after that often walked to the Sand Pit to see that sand was being dug in the proper manner.

CHAPTER IX

UNSUCCESSFUL ROMANCE

I WAS sixteen years old when father read a letter I had received from a friend of mine, a gymnasium student at Tula, and forbade me to correspond with him. I stood in my room, lost and confused, holding the letter in my hands and trying to explain to father that my relations with the *gimnazist* were a perfectly good friendship and nothing more. He interrupted me with annoyance: "It's to no purpose." He spoke without looking at me. "It's to no purpose at all. Inform him that he must not write to you any more." Father had noticed in the letter something that suggested feelings more tender than friendship. But I never thought of it, my attention being entirely occupied with trying to convert to Tolstoyism a youth who was infected by Socialism. I considered father wrong, but did not wish to disobey him and wrote to the *gimnazist* that, in accordance with my father's wishes, I must cease correspondence with him. The youth was offended and for many years afterward never came to our house.

When my sisters were still unmarried, I noticed how intensely it worried father when he saw somebody courting them. Involuntarily, he jealously watched their every movement and listened to the tone of their voices, catching every coquettish note; sometimes it cost him a great effort to remain quietly amiable to the young men concerned; sometimes, on the contrary, he became exaggeratedly polite to them, as if to emphasize the fact that not the slightest intimacy was possible between them and his daughters. I think that, perhaps, in this attitude of his, there was jealousy and fear of losing his daughters, but principally fear of things unclean. "I was young myself," he used to say, "I know how repulsive, how vile, the manifestations of passion can be."

Among the men who tried to approach his daughters, he tried to divine with some fatherly, masculine sense those who had evil thoughts. He was tormented and exercised, saw danger where there was none, and sometimes failed to notice it where it really existed. He forbade me to correspond with the naïve *gimnazist* from Tula, but he never knew that when I was fifteen a Tolstoyan had pursued me. One day the man called me, on some pretext, into the empty lackeys' waiting-room next to the entrance hall, spoke about something in a

soft and ingratiating voice, and then with a sudden, brusque movement seized me and wanted to clasp me to his chest. The odor of sweat and tar swept over me; I struck him with my fist as hard as I could, wrenched myself free and ran, trembling from offense and loathing.

But it was difficult to foresee what would cause father worry. I remember another case: the tutor of the Sukhotin children came to Yasnaia Poliana—a lame student with whom I had become friendly in Crimea. We sat together in the "Remington room," checking an article I had copied for father. The student read the copy and I followed the original manuscript; once in a while we interrupted the work to exchange remarks about what we read. The student was happy to see me, happy to be at Yasnaia Poliana and to help. His lean face was beaming and he looked at me with gratitude. Father entered the room several times while we were reading. Every time he stood there silently for a while and went out. He had done this at other times when I checked back his work. He liked to hear how it sounded in order to improve the passages which seemed to him insufficiently smooth or not clearly enough expressed. The last time he came in and stood for a long time at the door, his hands behind his belt.

"Will you be through soon?" he asked.

"Not yet—what is it?"

"Nothing—nothing at all." And he hastily returned to his study. His tone and the expression of his face seemed to indicate that he was displeased with something, but I dismissed the thought. "It must have seemed so to me," I thought, and we continued to read. But a few minutes later Masha called me out into the neighboring room. She looked irritated. "What are you doing to father?" she asked me sternly.

"What?" I mumbled, frightened.

"Do you have to ask? Don't you see what a state he's in?"

"Why? What has happened?"

"So you don't know!" Masha was losing her temper. "He was going to drive out that student of yours! And you see nothing and sit there flirting with him!"

"What are you saying, Masha? He is so unfortunate! I feel sorry for him!"

"Sorry!" she imitated me. "Don't you know that he is in love with you? Father said: 'I'll fling him down the staircase! How dare he look at Sasha in that way!'"

I implored her to calm father, and assured her that I'd arrange

things so that the student would leave, so long as nothing was done to hurt his feelings. Masha must have understood that she had taken it all too much to heart. She promised to talk with father and left the room. When I returned to the "Remington room," I could not face the student; I felt guilty and did not know what to say. He must have guessed that something had gone wrong, and he left the next morning.

Prince N—— visited at the house. He was a young man, handsome, smoothly shaven, with a pink and white complexion, sprucely dressed. He conversed like a refined man of the world and had corresponding manners. I paid little attention to him. This displeased mother, who tried to be cordial to the prince. She had always desired to marry me to a wealthy man with a good name, and the prince met all her requirements.

It was a serene June evening. We all went to the gypsy camp that was pitched in the vicinity. From time immemorial gypsies have traveled in large and small bands past Yasnaia Poliana along the old Ekaterininsky highway, a broad dirt road bordered with willows, which was constructed in the reign of Catherine II. The gypsies lived in their wagons or in tents, and kept sick, old, lame, and blind horses which they sold profitably at fairs. Everybody knew that gypsies were swindlers; but the proverb "If you don't deceive, you don't sell" was nowhere so well applied as among them. In spite of everything they succeeded in selling their horses. They painted those that had whitened with the years, they filed down their teeth so that their age could not be told; just before a fair, they made them gulp down a dose of vodka. No horse dealer in the world knew such trickery as did a gypsy.

Whether it was for their wildness and shrewdness or for their amazing musical gifts, the fact is that all the Tolstoys, not excepting my father, loved gypsies. My uncle Sergei Nikolayevich was married to a gypsy woman; several of the Tolstoys had squandered fortunes on them. The gypsies were usually driven away everywhere; estate owners would not allow them to stop on their land because they always made trouble, ruined the hay crop on a meadow, or perhaps led off a horse. But nobody persecuted them at Yasnaia Poliana, and they did no damage to the estate.

This time the gypsies had pitched their tents on the side of a knoll near "the boundary," as we called the spot where a brick post, some three yards thick, had been erected, probably in Catherine's time. It

was adorned with the two-headed imperial eagle and served to mark the boundary between the Tula and the Krapivna districts. The swarthy gypsy men, mumbling something under their noses, were tying the front feet of several piebald horses. The scrawny women, their heads bound with dirty-colored kerchiefs from which escaped black, wiry locks of hair, and wearing tucked-up skirts and big, shining earrings, busied themselves at the crackling camp fires over which they hung black, soot-covered kettles. Tattered clothes were hung to dry on the shafts of the unharnessed wagons. Dogs barked, horses snorted, children screamed. There was a smell of smoke, dung, and horse sweat.

On seeing us, the gypsies knew at once that we had come to see them dance, and began to gather into a circle. The women begged: "Give something to our little gypsies, give something to these naked little bellies!" A young man entered the circle, stopped, raised his head high, looked around him, slapped his knees, struck the ground with his palm and walked, turning his elbows out slightly with every step. An old man in a torn black coat moved his shoulders rhythmically without leaving his place, stamped his foot, shouted something in a hoarse, savage voice; and suddenly, with heavy, indolent grace, started to glide smoothly along the circle. The women sang in loud, shrieking voices. One young curly-haired gypsy, displaying his white teeth, played with two wooden spoons as with castanets. The gypsies danced, beating out a difficult tap with their feet while their bodies remained motionless—it was as though they were swimming over the ground. At the climax of the dance, the old man suddenly stopped short, slightly moved one shoulder, threw his cap to the ground, jumped, stood as if petrified for a moment, then raised his arms in the air and again went on along the circle.

After the men had finished dancing, the women glided into the circle. It was hard to keep track of what they did with their feet. There was not one sharp movement in their dancing, but their shoulders vibrated, the coin necklaces clinked on their chests and the long earrings swayed. One forgot all about their filth and stealing, and the rags they wore; in the dance, they were proud and beautiful. How good it was to hear father admire them, and how cheerfully he laughed, exclaiming from his very heart, "Marvelous, marvelous—ah, how beautiful!"

We hardly noticed the little, half-naked, curly-haired gypsy children entering the circle. Imitating the grown-ups they conscientiously tapped with their bare little feet, shook their shoulders and slapped

the ground with their palms. We were enraptured. We did not need to exchange impressions, they were understood without words.

"Don't you think, Countess, there is an ocean of poetry in this?" a strange voice sounded in my ear. I started. The remark of the young prince sounded so banal and false. I did not talk to him and went home with father in the buggy.

Several days passed. The prince appeared again.

"What makes this smooth-licked prince come here?" father asked me. I was startled by his unusually harsh tone.

"I don't know," I replied.

"An excellent young man," mother remarked. "Well-bred, of a good family, and very wealthy."

Father said nothing. And after dinner, when the prince took a seat next to me and started to entertain me with conversation, I took out of my pocket a handful of sunflower seeds and cracked them with my teeth, spitting the husks out upon the ground.¹

The prince never came back. Mother was angry.

"Sasha does not begin to know how to behave," she said. "She drives the decent suitors off—very well, she'll stay a spinster long enough."

My brothers' friend, Aliosha Diakov, often came to our house. I had thought, at first, that he was courting someone else, but gradually I noticed that he tried to stay with me, was embarrassed in my presence and blushed often; I no longer felt natural when I was with him. When I visited Andrei and Olga at Tapykovo, Aliosha was often there.

Once, after Aliosha's departure from Yasnaia Poliana, a letter from him was brought to me. In it he asked me to become his wife. I read the letter over several times. It was great fun; I felt afraid of something and agreeably excited at the thought that a marriage proposal had been made me, as to a grown-up lady.

The news immediately spread in the house. I did not know how to conceal things, and probably Aliosha had told my brothers also. They looked at me slyly, smiled, and made me feel quite confused. In the evening, I remembered that I must write an answer.

"What is one supposed to say in such cases?" I asked myself. "I believe I must express regret over the loss of comradely relations, and something else, too."

1. A favorite Russian pastime, something like American peanut eating or gum chewing.

The thought that I could marry Aliosha, or that he might be waiting anxiously, and that my reply might be of great significance to him, never entered my mind. I sat down and wrote him a reply which even now I am ashamed to remember.

The next morning when father called me in, I entered his study with a gay, sure step. I was still in the cheerful and excited mood of the day before.

"Did you call me?"

"Yes." From his knitted eyebrows and his averted eyes—father never looked at me when he felt displeased—I understood that it was going to be a serious conversation. He remained silent for a minute and then asked:

"Aliosha proposed to you, did he not?"

"Yes."

"Well—and what?"

"I have refused him."

"Why?"

"I don't love him."

"Nonsense! In my time groom and bride were spoken for by their elders—sometimes they did not even see each other before marriage. And they were happier than nowadays. Think it over—he seems to be a good man."

"I don't want to marry!"

"You are wrong. This is an important question, his fate and yours is being decided," father said low and earnestly. "You must not look at it in such a flighty way."

I was silent. Thoughts raced through my head. "How does he know how I look at it? And why does he believe it so important? Yes, he did say, 'Your fate is being decided.' That is true—everything might have changed!" Suddenly Aliosha's thin, mobile face rose in my memory, a face at once confused and affectionate, when, at our last parting, he looked at me, not knowing what to say, started to say something, but changed his mind and went away, waving his hand. "My brothers said something about his buying an estate—said he was going to build a hospital, because I liked medical work." I felt sorry for Aliosha.

"Why do you say nothing?" father asked.

An adventure which had pleasantly tickled my pride no longer seemed merely amusing. I felt more and more ill at ease. I tried to imagine myself as Aliosha's wife.

"I can't—I can't get married!" I exclaimed.

"You are wrong to decide so quickly," father said, "I'd advise you to think it over a little."

"There's nothing to think about." The weight on my heart increased; I could hardly keep from bursting into tears. "I am not going anywhere away from you!"

"Ah, no, ah, no, my dear!" father spoke quickly, as if frightened. "No, no. I am old, I'll die before long. You must arrange your life independently."

"Well—do you wish me to be unhappy?"

From under shaggy eyebrows his gray piercing eyes looked at me; I felt as if their gaze penetrated deeply—very deeply—into my innermost being. Father's face suddenly lighted up with joy.

"Well, that'll do, that'll do, my love," he said tenderly, putting his hand on my shoulder. "Don't let us speak of it any more."

Having come home with us from Crimea, Dr. Nikitin tried to be as useful to father as he could, but there was too little work for him and the position of a house physician seemed to weigh on him. And so he and I had the idea of opening a dispensary for peasants at Yasnaia Poliana. Dmitri Vasilievich volunteered his services, and I undertook to furnish the medical supplies and help him receive the patients. I was sure that father would be in sympathy with this undertaking.

The work started out well. The whole district soon learned that there was a doctor at Yasnaia Poliana who treated people without pay and helped them. Patients flocked to us. We arranged the dispensary in a vacant peasant home. The furnishings were most primitive. We were at first short of instruments and medicine, but worked with enthusiasm. We left the house at about eight in the morning and came back at about two. Dmitri Vasilievich taught me patiently, and gradually I began to get used to the work. I was no longer so badly frightened by the sight of sick people, of blood, wounds, everything that startles the novice in medicine. But I continued to fear the syphilitics. They were fairly numerous in our district and no matter how hard I tried to control myself I never could approach them without terror. The dispensary introduced me to a new world of sorrow and benightedness, of filth, poverty, everlasting undernourishment, rickets, "chicken blindness" resulting from the absence of fats in food, syphilis, crime.

There was a halfwit, Parasha, in the village. Often, when censuring woman's lack of logic, vanity, and devotion to trifles, father used to say that Parasha was an ideal woman. She did not interfere with any-

body, was docile, kind to everyone, sorry for all who suffered, and liked everybody. What else could one want in a woman? I remember the indignation of our friend, Sofia Alexandrovna Stakhovich, at this.

"What are you talking about, Lev Nikolayevich? She is a half-wit!"

"And what does a woman need intelligence for?" father asked.

Then Parasha became pregnant. The perpetrator of this crime remained undiscovered. "Halfwit she is all right, and yet she knew how to keep it secret!" the village women said, shaking their heads. The motherly instinct was very strong in her. She perpetually gathered all kinds of rags and saved pennies. When somebody asked her what she needed them for, Parasha replied: "And for the small one," and her face spread in a foolish smile. But, fortunately enough, the baby died as soon as it was born.

In the summer, Parasha was hired to watch our calves in the pasture. One day she came to our dispensary with a skin affliction which the doctor was unable to diagnose at once. I, however, imagined that she had syphilis. I had busied myself with her when she first came in, forgot to disinfect my hands and did not remember it until I reached home. There were fresh scratches on my hands. Terror seized me. I rushed around in search of a disinfectant and could not find any. The conviction grew on me that I had caught the infection. Finally, just as I found a large bottle of disinfectant and was pouring it out upon my hands, father walked into the room. He noticed my excitement at once.

"What is the matter?"

When I told him, instead of comforting me, he himself became excited.

"Ah, you are wrong, you are wrong to be going to that dispensary."

A few days later he said, "I want to ask you not to go to the dispensary with Nikitin any more."

"Why?"

"It's unnecessary—"

Usually I never contradicted him, but this time I rebelled. Work in the dispensary meant much to me. It opened the peasant mind to me; it strengthened my self-control. I tried to explain that to father, but he did not order me, he only said: "Just the same, I would ask you not to go to the dispensary with the doctor any more—it's unnecessary."

I submitted. But I never understood why he insisted upon my leaving the work. Was it because he was afraid of infection or was he

afraid that I should fall in love with Nikitin? If it was both, the second reason, I think, was stronger.

Nikitin stayed with us about a year and then left, first for three months on account of his mother's death, and later altogether. Another doctor, a friend of his, came to Yasnaia Poliana. He was the very opposite of Nikitin: unembarrassed, noisy. He liked to talk about himself and to brag a little. He treated patients roughly, called them down sometimes. Our new doctor was one of those whom men cannot stand but women like very well. It seemed to me that even Julia Ivanovna was not quite indifferent to him.

We had many rats and mice at Yasnaia Poliana. They gnawed holes in the floors, got into closets, spoiled books, ate the candles, fell into the food, and sometimes jumped upon bedside tables and ran over the beds and heads of sleepers. Father usually baited a trap himself with a piece of cheese smoked over a candle flame; and when a rat was caught he cautiously carried it somewhere far into the woods and there set it free. Mother argued that this method of combating the vermin was ineffective, that the rats would undoubtedly come back to the house, that they should be drowned in slop pails.

Sometimes regular rat hunts were started. Mother, Julia Ivanovna, the doctor, nurse, the men servants, everybody, took part. All cracks and holes were stopped and the rat chased with brooms until cornered and killed. The doctor was magnificent on these occasions. He stood at the door in readiness, and when the rat darted near him, he flattened it on the spot with one adroit stroke of his heel. We were shocked and revolted, and the doctor, his head thrown back, went off in deep rolling laughter.

That spring—it was 1903—Tania, with her husband and his children, Natasha and Dorik, stayed with us. The spring was early and hot. The orchard was through its blossoming time, and white and pink petals covered the black circles of upturned soil around the trees; the lilacs began to blossom and nightingales were singing. Along the garden path that led from our house to the "Kuzminsky house," where Aunt Tania and her family were living, the May beetles droned and scuttled underfoot and the frogs split their throats croaking, as if intent on out-shouting everything else. From the village came faintly the singing of women, the lowing of cattle, laughter, and accordion playing.

Natasha and I could not sleep and yearningly mused aloud about our best years being wasted. Natasha and the doctor often sat in the

evening on a bench under the spruce tree in front of the house and talked endlessly about something. I felt angry. I was bored staying alone, yet I wished to avoid the doctor. Several weeks before he had written me a tactless letter, accusing me of coquetry and telling me, without any necessary reason for doing so, that he was guilty of the death of a young woman who had killed herself for love of him.

April 23, my name's day, was as hot as summer. We all went to visit "old lady Schmidt" at Ovsianikovo, bringing noise and commotion into her quiet abode, and drank a few pitchers of ice-cold milk with black bread. Father dropped in for a minute, which made Maria Alexandrovna light up with joy. We had dinner on our veranda, and, in the evening, an organ grinder wandered in from nobody knew where. He played and we danced—all of us, even Tania and mother. In the night, Natasha and I talked about love and about the doctor.

The Sukhotins were leaving the following morning, and I went to see them off at the station. As I was going through the woods, the doctor jumped into the carriage. He had been waiting for me. In a couple of weeks, I became used to him, tried to overlook his vulgar ways, his boasting, self-assured tone. In another month, I decided that I was in love.

Often when I rode horseback far away in the woods or in the field the doctor's tall figure appeared before me. He walked alongside my horse and we talked. He told me of his love, looked embarrassed and timid, and seemed to be a different man, unpretentious and lovable. But though I became increasingly convinced that I loved him, something kept me from confessing it to him.

Meanwhile, father observed us. I constantly felt his searching, attentive glance. I knew that I needed only to raise my eyes and meet his and he would know my secret. And then the terrible moment came. I brought some copied work to father, put it on the desk before him and started to leave.

"Wait—I wish to speak to you," he said. "What is there between you and the doctor?"

Father did not like the doctor. I knew it although he had never said a word to me about it.

"He told you that he loves you, did he?"

"Yes."

"Well—and what did you answer?"

"I think I love him, too," I replied in despair, feeling as though I were falling off a precipice.

"Oh, Lord, Lord," father moaned. "Did you really tell him—did you promise him anything?"

"No, no!" I cried out quickly. "I didn't!"

Father sighed with relief. Then, weeping and stammering, I told him all there was to tell. Several times I had to stop, the tears choked me. When I finished, I ran out on the porch, bent down to the balustrade and wept for a long time. I could hear father walking back and forth in his study. When I quieted down, I went back to him. Father began to talk to me and with his every word I understood more and more that the doctor was a stranger, a distant stranger to me, that all this romance was nothing but a spell cast by the springtime and by my night conversations with Natasha.

"I shall tell him to leave."

But the mere thought that father would talk to the doctor and be upset about it horrified me.

"No, no!" I exclaimed. "I beg you, don't do that, I shall arrange it myself so that he will leave. Trust me, please trust me," I was saying between sobs, "I shall never, never hide anything from you again, I promise you."

Father turned aside, I heard strange sounds—something like coughing, I seized his hand and kissed it. We looked at each other with eyes full of tears.

"The doctor—romancing—" I thought as I was going out of his study, "what is it all worth compared with such happiness? Could I ever leave him—exchange him for anyone in the world?"

And as I was running down the stairs I said aloud: "I make this pledge to myself, that I shall never leave him for anyone."

Downstairs I found the doctor.

"I am leaving tomorrow!" I said to him.

"And when are you coming back?"

"When you are no longer here."

The next day, I went to visit my brother Ilya, in the province of Kaluga. The doctor saw me off on the front steps.

I stayed with Ilya for a week. My niece Annochka and I played the phonograph and often put on my favorite piece, Glinka's "Calm Down, Ye Storms of Passion." I listened and cried over my broken romance. In my dreams it appeared quite poetic. When I came home, the doctor had left, and in his place Doctor Nikitin soon came again. He handed me a thick envelope. I wished to keep my promise and ran to father.

"Papa—a letter from the doctor."

I took an envelope, put in the letter without opening it, and sealed and addressed it to him. I waited for father's approval, but he never said a word. It seems to me now that I acted meanly.

I heard later from Doctor Nikitin that the doctor went into the Russo-Japanese War as a physician in the navy, and that he died there.

CHAPTER X

WALKING AND RIDING

HOW cheerful father looked when he came out of his study after work that had satisfied him! A light, easy step, a merry face, laughing eyes. Sometimes, when in such a mood, he turned on one heel, or quickly and with great agility threw one leg over the back of a chair. I think that any self-respecting Tolstoyan would have been horrified by such conduct on the part of his teacher.

Gaiety was not easily forgiven father, as this incident suggests. We were having dinner on the verandah. Mother was sitting in the "chairman's place," as it was called in our family. On her right sat father, and next to him, Chertkov. It was hot, and the mosquitoes gave us no respite. They swarmed in the air, droning sharply and stinging our faces, hands, and feet. Father was talking with Chertkov; the rest listened. All were in a good and lively humor, laughing and joking.

Suddenly father, after a glance at Chertkov's head, gave a quick, adroit whack upon its bald top. A little smear of blood remained from the huge mosquito he had crushed there. Everybody laughed, including father. But the laughter stopped abruptly. Chertkov, gloomily knitting his handsome brows, was looking at father reproachfully. "What have you done, Lev Nikolayevich?" he said slowly. "You have taken the life of a living being. Are you not ashamed?" Father was embarrassed, and everyone felt uncomfortable.

When father was in good humor, he always invented interesting outings: to the Zaseka forest—an enormous tract, near Tula, that belonged to the Government; to Maria Alexandrovna Schmidt's; or to the Provaly—a group of small natural lakes of regular circular form, seven versts from us in the forest. On such occasions, he gathered up everybody, young and old. For those whom walking fatigued a saddle horse was taken along. Father avoided main-traveled roads and liked short cuts. He knew the Zaseka forest unusually well, but even he frequently lost his way in its footpaths.

Sometimes we took our visitors with us. Once, I remember, a couple came to see us, the man belonging to the Yellow Cuirassiers—a fat, red-faced, taciturn officer in white summer uniform coat with yellow shoulder straps—his wife, talkative and forward, a typical regiment lady, who kept saying to her husband, "Volodichka, why don't you

talk to Lev Nikolayevich?" After dinner, father went with them for a walk in Zaseka, and this time, as usual, he could not resist the temptation to take a short cut. From the Kudeiar Well (so called after a legendary forest highwayman), he undertook to lead the company by a footpath out to the highway. They had to cross the Voronka on two poles thrown over the rivulet. Father crossed, the regiment lady easily bounced her way over. Then came the turn of Volodichka, but he was visibly timid. With the others looking on, he started over, got as far as the middle, suddenly became flustered, and hurried. Then one pole broke under him, and he fell in with a big splash. Father laughed uproariously, as he told of this incident later, and ever afterward called the spot "Volodichka's crossing."

Father loved flowers, but he always picked the blossoms without the leaves, making a tight cluster. When I arranged flowers for him according to my liking, adding some foliage and placing them loosely in a vase, he did not like it, and used to say, "That's all to no purpose—make it simpler."

Generally, he was the first one of the family to bring home the spring flowers, scarcely open—violets, forget-me-nots, lilies of the valley. He enjoyed them, and passed them around for everybody to smell. He loved forget-me-nots and the wild morning-glories best of all. "Smell them," he would exclaim. "What a fine fragrance, like bitter almonds! And what colors—just look!"

Horses and dogs played no small part in our household. A thoroughbred Siberian Eskimo dog, Belka, was once presented to father. He was a good dog, affectionate but very serious, with a sense of dignity. But father did not pay much attention to him and did not feed him, and so Belka refused to acknowledge him as master. He was much more willing to go walking with Julia Ivanovna or me. Sometimes he pretended that he was going with father, ran ahead of him, looked into his eyes, wagged his tail, followed him across the apple orchard as far as the forest, and then slipped away, and returned home. This offended father. "You've taken Belka away from me," he used to say to us, "he won't walk with me any more!"

Later I acquired a *borzoi* of good pedigree—a huge, hairy dog with a long muzzle. He would follow in my footsteps, his face gloomily lowered to the ground. But no sooner did he catch sight of a flock of sheep than he flew at them full speed, pushed into their midst, and not infrequently killed one or more. He was punished for this and

shut up, but nothing helped. Then my borzoi began taking walks with father. One day, father came home upset. "I wish you would take your dog away somewhere," he said. "He chased the sheep again today! I had a hard time driving him off."

"You're tired," I said.

"That doesn't matter. But he made me commit a sin. I took off my belt and gave him a beating. What is worse, I did it in anger."

Finally, I had to give the borzoi away.

Two dogs of uncertain lineage made their home in our courtyard, Tiulpan and Tsygan. Probably they were brothers, they were so much alike: both black, with white chests, hanging ears, rather moth-eaten in front and very shaggy behind, with countless burrs always in their fur. These two always accompanied father on his walks.

In the very thickest of the Zakaz—a forest on the Yasnaia Poliana estate—a hardly perceptible trail led to a spring at the bottom of a deep ravine. At one place, it formed a small pool of pure, clear water. This was called the Wolves' Well. Badgers lived near it, in a little hillock. They dug very deep dens which communicated with one another by underground passages. To this wild spot, where a human being was hardly ever seen, father liked to go. The dogs crawled into the badgers' den, went into one hole and out another, sometimes driving out the inhabitants. One fine day Tsygan shot out of a den squealing horribly and covered with blood. A badger had bitten off his tail. Another time, the dogs drove out a big badger right under our feet as father and I were walking in the Chapysh. This was the name of a small wood near our house, which my father described in *Anna Karenina*, where the storm overtakes Kitty and her baby in the forest.

"Who wants to go on a vegetarian hunt with me?" father would ask after dinner in early spring. We pulled on heavy marsh boots smelling of tar, and gayly followed him across the apple orchard and Chapysh into the Zakaz. Some snow, muddy and caked, was still left on the shady side of ditches, the forest was leafless, but the swollen buds had already turned brown, and tender yellow down showed on the willows. We came out into a clearing and stopped.

"Now be quiet," father said, "don't talk—listen."

We sat down on stumps and waited, listening intently.

"Hear? Hear?"—father whispered.

"Khr—khr—khr," we heard a snipe's coughing. He flew over our heads, described a circle in the air, and disappeared behind the trees.

Then came a second, a third. It grew very still. Darkness fell. Our boots smacked loudly in the wet ground as we went home.

"How strange—how strange it seems," father said, "that there was a time when I was fascinated by hunting, and killed—"

When going horseback riding with father, you had to "mind your step," as our coachman, Adrian Pavlovich, used to say, and stick tight to your saddle. Father usually rode his horse Délire through ravines and marshes or on little trails through dense forest, without much regard for obstacles in his way.

"It looks narrow here, I wonder if we can pass," I would observe.

"And who do you think can take a narrow trail better, a man or a horse?" father retorted, guiding Délire along the very edge of a deep ravine.

"Man!"

"No, horse. You've nothing to fear."

If there was a stream in our way, father, without hesitating, urged Délire on, and the horse flew across like a bird. Sometimes he jumped a stream and went uphill at a gallop though trees and bushes were thick in our way.

Once father fell off his horse as we were riding past an iron foundry, five miles from our house, and were about to cross the paved highway. Father's mount was a steppe horse and a spirited one. It shied, stumbled over a heap of paving stones, and fell. I felt as though something had been torn from its place inside me—but father, without dropping the bridle from his hand and with amazing quickness, freed his foot from the stirrup and jumped up before the horse did.

"Oh," I gasped, "did you hurt yourself?"

"No, it was nothing at all."

He led the horse to the same heap of stones, mounted, and we went on. "See that you tell mama nothing about this," he called out to me as we resumed our ride.

In his last years, we were afraid to let him ride by himself—there was the possibility of a fainting spell or a heart attack. So some member of the household always went with him.

One day father and I were riding home along the "bathing trail"—the path that led to our bathhouse on the Voronka. We had come to the little clearing where a carpet of tender blue forget-me-nots always blossomed in the spring, and, in the summer, handsome, firm mushrooms (*boroviki*) grew on rose-tan stems, with velvety tops and creamy lining. Father called to me, "Sasha!" And when I caught up

with him he said: "Here, between these oaks"—his hand tightened the bridle, and he pointed with his whip, which made *Délire* give a nervous start—"bury me when I die."

There, in accordance with his wish, he was laid to rest.

CHAPTER XI

UNCLE SERIOZHA

SOON after our return from Crimea, Uncle Seriozha came to see father. He was a rare visitor at Yasnaia Poliana, especially in the last years, and it was strange to see him outside of Pirogovo, in surroundings other than his own. No trace remained of his customary grimness and aloofness. He seemed touched and softened—it was the joy of meeting once more the brother whom he had lost hope of seeing again after his grave illness in Crimea.

Their meeting was extraordinarily touching. The two old men tried to avoid points of discussion on which they might disagree. Father told Uncle Seriozha of his literary plans and Sergei Nikolayevich listened attentively, although his convictions made it impossible for him to sympathize with much of what he heard. In the morning they had coffee together in father's study. Usually no one was supposed to come into the study at that time, as father was accustomed to begin his work over his coffee, going through the mail, planning the day's routine. He was tenderly solicitous about Uncle Seriozha's comfort: asked him if he was not tired; if he would not like to rest; treated him to apples, trying to find soft ones to suit his brother's teeth. Strange and yet so tender sounded the diminutive names—"Liovochka," "Seriozha"—from the lips of these two men in their late seventies. Old age made the two brothers look alike: the same calm, respectable appearance and fine breeding of old aristocrats; the same habit of emitting yawns, or rather groans, so loud that they startled everyone in the house.

"O-o-o-oh, oh-o-o-oh, oh-o-o-oh!" a fearful moan or cry would suddenly come from the study.

"What is it? Who is crying? Is Lev Nikolayevich unwell?" persons unused to the ways of the house would ask apprehensively.

"It's nothing," we would answer, laughing. "Lev Nikolayevich is yawning."

The family life of Uncle Seriozha was peculiar. His wife, the meek Maria Mikhailovna, a gypsy woman, and his three daughters—Vera, Varia and Masha—trembled before him. Stillness reigned in the house; everyone feared to disturb him. At times Uncle Seriozha, remembering something unpleasant or not feeling quite well, emitted

a loud "Ah-ah-ah-ah!" in his study. His wife and daughters were frightened anew and became absolutely silent.

I never saw my uncle's son, Grigori Sergeyevich. It was said that he had quarreled with his father, married against his will, and lived somewhere in Orel. The three daughters were friends of my sisters and were under my father's influence. Uncle Seriozha gave them a good education at home. They knew foreign languages well and practically always spoke French among themselves. They lived very simply, doing everything for themselves: washed their clothes, cleaned their rooms, worked in the vegetable garden, and milked the cows. In the winter, they taught the village children reading and writing. They did all these things quietly and inconspicuously, knowing that their father did not approve.

They had strange fancies. I remember how once I came to Pirogovo and found Vera in a back room of the house teaching some peasant children.

"We are having an English lesson," she told me.

"English?" I was surprised. "Why, when they don't know their own language well enough?"

"Well—they wanted it," Verochka said meekly, "and so I'm teaching it to them."

All three sisters always spoke very softly as though apologizing for speaking at all. And Verochka, when laughing, always became embarrassed and covered her mouth with her hand.

"You know, I've been explaining an English word to this boy here," she said, putting her hand caressingly on one boy's head, "and he says to me: 'Cleverly done, you old dog!' What do you think of that?"

My cousins lived a very retired life, and saw only peasants, workers, and, in general, people of less intellectual development than themselves. Uncle Seriozha gradually prevented all the neighbors from visiting them. He was intolerant and could not bear empty and vulgar talk. He thought the landlords who lived in the vicinity uninteresting, too poorly educated. One neighbor, a young man, was passionately in love with Masha, the youngest daughter of Sergei Nikolayevich. And Masha—silent, small, with wavy black hair, very gypsy-like—was afraid of her father and did not know how to take her suitor's attentions. Sergei Vasilievich Bibikov was a tall, well-built man with a handsome turned-up moustache, a nobleman, an ardent huntsman and horseman, but with only a little education. Uncle Seriozha considered him unworthy of his daughter. The doors of the Pirogovo manor house were closed to him, but he tried to meet Masha wherever

possible, appearing before her unexpectedly on horseback in the field or in the woods, and in every way tried to win her affection.

Pirogovo was situated thirty-five versts from Yasnaia Poliana, but the locality was a very different one. A few versts away from Yasnaia Poliana there was no more forest and the steppe began. Our peasants were spoiled people who long ago had abandoned the woven embroidered shirts and homespun, checkered woolen skirts; but at Pirogovo it was still possible to see—especially on old women—the traditional peasant garb. The peasants of Yasnaia Poliana worked in towns as coachmen and teamsters or went into factories and shops. Poor soil and small land allotments failed to keep families going. Pirogovo, on the other hand, had good soil—black loam—and the peasants lived chiefly by agriculture. The best rye flour came to the Tula market from those places. The Yasnaia Poliana peasants had a contemptuous way of referring to those of Pirogovo: "Oh, they're steppe people, what can they know?" "Spoiled people, suburban folks," the Pirogovo peasants said in turn of ours.

We used to drive to Pirogovo by team, as there was no advantage in going by rail, for Pirogovo was seventeen versts from the station. Most of the way was along the highway, between fields, and the names of villages were strange, especially of those farther in the interior of the steppe: "Cows' Tails," "Ikon Settlement." Quite near Pirogovo a farm belonging to father's sister, Aunt Masha, had the altogether ridiculous name of "Pants." We used to explode with laughter when we asked peasants where they came from and received the answer "We're from the Countess' Pants." Pirogovo could be seen from a distance. It was situated high on a knoll. An old, white church was sharply outlined against the background of thick, dark trees; and below, the Upa River wound its endless loops in a great meadow. On both sides of the river, over its abruptly falling banks, sprawled the big village. On the right was Aunt Masha's small farm, and on the left, back of the church and all hidden among trees and bushes, was "big Pirogovo" as we called it.

The house was very old and spread out, with a large greenhouse where, in Uncle Seriozha's time, there were always many flowers. The furniture sagged with age, and the upholstery was somewhat shabby. Most of it once belonged to grandfather Nikolai Ilyich Tolstoy.¹ Next to the house was a small, neglected park; some of its lanes were so overgrown that the sun scarcely penetrated to them—they were always cool and smelled damp. Some lanes were bordered with wolves' bones,

1. The prototype of Count Nicholas Rostov in *War and Peace*.

which made a fearsome impression on me when I was little. I was afraid to think of all these beasts which Uncle Seriozha had killed when hunting.

I do not know the reason, but Uncle Seriozha was always kind to me, and I was not afraid of him. When I called, he asked me about father, and every little detail of father's life interested him. I had to tell him what father was writing, and who came to see him, and in what humor he was.

And in the evening, when the kerosene lamp with the large, dark shade was lighted in the drawing-room, a small, wrinkled old lady in black dress and black headkerchief and soft cloth slippers came in with soundless steps and said, smiling with the corners of her toothless mouth:

"Well, well, my little marvelous"—"marvelous," "little marvelous," were her favorite words—"sing me something."

I would cast a sidelong look at Uncle Seriozha.

"Sergei Nikolayevich will be glad," she would say, nodding her head. "Sing 'Shel me versta,' Alexandra Lvovna."²

"Sing, sing," Sergei Nikolayevich would say, smiling.

Then I went to the piano and sang, and the old woman stood by smiling and whispering the gypsy words after me.

"Aunt Masha," I would ask her afterwards, obstinately calling her "aunt," although she always called me by name and patronymic, "what is the meaning of those gypsy words?"

She tried to remember and couldn't. After her long years with Uncle Seriozha, she had forgotten her mother tongue.

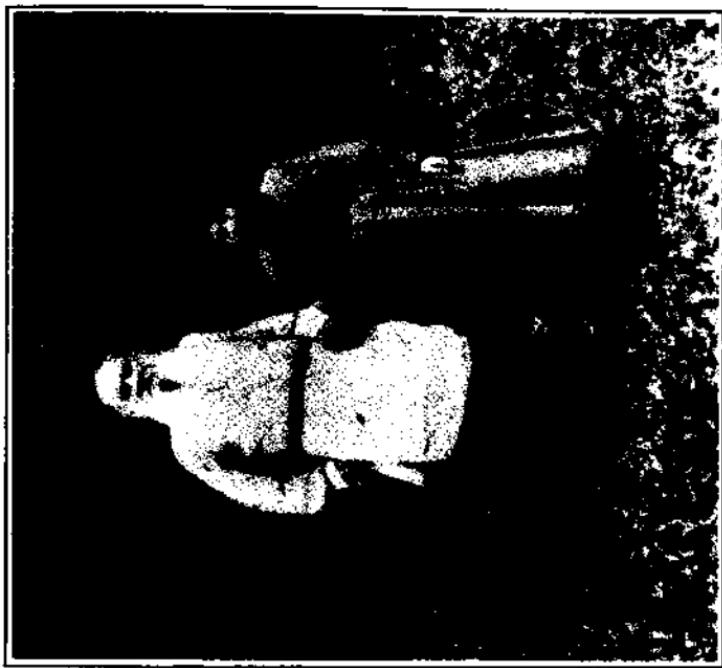
"I don't remember, my little marvelous," she would say, "no, I don't remember. You had better sing some more."

People said that, in her youth, she had an amazing voice—that it was impossible to hear her without tears. But in my time she no longer sang.

In this way, life at Pirogovo went on, and no one could anticipate the events that came on—least of all Uncle Seriozha to whom these things were the worst possible humiliation that could befall him.

A young, comely cook, Volodia, lived in the house; he was one of those servants who live on the same estate for years and become part of the household. Varia—homely, small, almost a dwarf, with long, thick, plaited hair—fell in love with the cook. Interpreting my father's teaching in her own way, she decided that it would be acting like a Tolstoyan to recognize no difference between herself and the cook.

2. In gypsy Russian: "Walked a hundred versts."



Tolstoy and his sister-in-law Maria Mikhailovna



Tolstoy riding Délire

When she went to consult father concerning her marriage, she was astounded to find that his disapproval of it was even more stern than her own father's; he sharply condemned her not only because she caused grief to Uncle Seriozha but even more because, in his opinion, no marriage could be happy between people who stood on different levels of development and had no interests in common. But Varia listened to no one and left her parents' house.

Shortly afterward, a second misfortune befell the family. The Tolstoys, practically every summer, secured Bashkirs³ from the Samara steppes to make kumiss⁴ which was especially desired for Sergei Nikolayevich's favorite daughter, Vera, who was anemic and inclined to be tubercular. That summer the Bashkir who came was young and handsome, and Vera fell in love with him.

"He was so nice," she used to tell me several years later. "He always read Lev Nikolayevich's books and talked with me about God and the soul. I felt very sorry for him and then I loved him. What do you think, Sasha," she asked me naïvely, "did I act very badly?" And Vera, too, left home and went away with the Bashkir.

Uncle Seriozha complained to no one, spoke of it with no one; but, at times, the deserted house rang with fearful cries: "Ah-ah-ah-ah!" And a small, wrinkled old woman started up in terror, walked with silent steps to the door of the study, crossed herself, not daring to go in, and again went to her own rooms. The old couple hastened to give their consent to the marriage of their last remaining daughter to Sergei Vasilievich Bibikov.

Varia and her cook settled in a small town. It was reported that he opened a shop with her money and began to drink and cruelly beat his diminutive wife. Then babies came, and the cook deserted her. During the revolution, she died somewhere in a far-away village, alone and unhappy, and left several children.

Pirogovo became still gloomier. Uncle Seriozha no longer spoke and only screamed—shut up in his study. Maria Mikhailovna did not complain and did not condemn her daughters; with an expression of pain or wonderment she asked me when I went to see her, "What do you think of that?—And Varia, Varia?—And Verochka, and Verochka, what do you say to that?"

3. A pastoral Mohammedan people of mixed Finnish and Turkish stock living in the steppes of Samara province.

4. Mare's milk, prepared in a special way. It is fermented in large vats and is slightly alcoholic. It is especially beneficial for lung patients. Sanatorium settlements existed in Russia, where such patients went to drink kumiss.

In another year, Vera returned, and in a back room, as far as possible from Sergei Nikolayevich's study, appeared a tiny, yellow-faced, slant-eyed boy, Misha. Uncle Seriozha forgave his daughter but did not wish to see his grandson.

Uncle Seriozha died in 1904 from cancer of the tongue. His sufferings were terrible. Vera and Maria Mikhailovna nursed him. Father called on him and always came back upset and grieved. On August 17, father wrote in his diary: "Pirogovo. Have been here three days. I am having a very hard time at Seriozha's. He suffers cruelly both physically and morally, but will not be resigned."

Uncle Seriozha could not reconcile himself to his sufferings and to death. He complained of his lot and found no comfort. Maria Mikhailovna suffered for him; she thought that confession and holy communion might ease his mind, but knowing his aversion to priests did not dare to call one. Father helped her. He suggested confession to Uncle Seriozha, who consented. Maria Mikhailovna felt better, and father, too, was glad: he hoped that, if no one else could, the priest might help prepare Sergei Nikolayevich for death.

When Uncle Seriozha died, old Maria Mikhailovna stayed at Pirogovo with Vera. She found comfort in her grandson Misha, a yellow-faced little animal who scowled, would not speak with anyone but his mother and grandmother and shied from everyone else. When he grew up a bit and they started teaching him to read and write, he always wanted to write from right to left, in the oriental manner.

During the revolution, when landlords' estates were being pillaged, Vera received warning that the peasants were going to sack Pirogovo. At night, taking with her only the most necessary belongings, the already quite feeble Maria Mikhailovna, and Misha, Vera left her old family home forever and hid at a priest's house. From there a peasant took them in his cart fifty versts to Tula. When they were only a few versts away, they saw a flaming red sky behind them: Pirogovo was burning. The old family possessions of the Tolstoys were carried off by the peasants—among them the old clavichord which Maria Nikolayevna, my father's mother, played once upon a time.

Maria Mikhailovna, after her journey to Tula in the springless cart, fell ill and died. Vera wandered for years from place to place in the south of Russia, suffering want, hunger, cold. Misha, himself as weak and sickly as his mother, had to work as a simple locksmith in a shop. Worn out, emaciated, in ragged clothes, they finally wandered one day into Yasnaia Poliana. Misha went to work again in a shop near

Tula, but soon began to cough up blood, fell ill, and died. A few months later, his mother also died of tuberculosis in a public hospital.

Of the whole family, Maria Sergeyevna—Masha—alone remained alive. Her husband died; she received a peasant's allotment of land and is working on it with her children.

CHAPTER XII

1905

MOBILIZATION is never so acutely felt in the town as in the village. City people live close together but are really very distant from one another; often they know nothing of what goes on in the neighboring houses or even in the neighboring apartment. In the village, everyone knows all about everyone else: what kind of family a man has, how many children, how much money, and who of the young fellows has been taken into the army. The grief caused by war is there before everybody's eyes, you cannot escape from the sight of it. Wailing is heard, the accordion is played, and several young voices, with drunken bravery, carry a tune, drop it, take it up again. Drunken recruits, their caps pushed away back, amble about in disorderly small groups; and, through their devil-may-care smartness and their song, one can see the dumb despair in their faces.

For a time, the Japanese War crowded out all other interests. Every-day joys and sorrows and everything else were engulfed in this calamity. Brother Andrei, who had only recently left his wife, Olga Konstantinovna, with two children, an unhappy man lost in some new love adventure, went to war; mother and brother Ilya, with his wife, went to Tver, where Andrei's regiment was stationed, to bid him farewell. Our cook, Semen Nikolayevich, was also drafted. Fat and soft and very unlike a soldier, he cried piteously when he kissed mother's hand and took leave of us all. Semen Nikolayevich was taken as cook to General Gurko and was immensely proud of it.

People began to come to father very often with requests that were in one way or another connected with war: "They've drafted me illegally," "We can't manage to get our family dole!" and the like.

There was no semblance of patriotism in the village. The peasants went because they were ordered to go, and it was impossible not to. But why this War had been started, why people were being driven out to the Far East, nobody knew.

Father's walks along the highway became more frequent. It was chiefly here that he gathered his news and caught the prevailing temper of the people and the peasants' attitude toward the War. He would ride a stretch with a peasant in his sleigh or cart, or walk a while with a group of women, talking of their needs.

He tried to read the papers, but could not keep it up long—they upset him too much. "I cannot go on reading the things people write of these bloody events as though they were discussing something exalted and beautiful, trying to evoke people's patriotism!" he used to say.

But no sooner would anyone call on us than he would ask, "Well, what is the news? What is there doing in the war?" And when he was told that the Japanese were coming out victorious, he was chagrined. "I cannot get rid of a feeling of grief when I hear that the Russians are getting beaten," he used to say.

When he learned of the surrender of Port Arthur, he exclaimed, "Eh, that was not the way we fought in my time!"

He wrote in his diary, under December 31, 1904:

The surrender of Port Arthur has grieved me, I feel sorrow. This is patriotism. I have been brought up in it and am not free from it, as I am not free from a personal egoism, a family egoism, even aristocratic egoism; and from patriotism. All these egoisms live in me; but I also have in me a consciousness of the divine law, and this consciousness holds in check all these egoisms so that I manage to live without serving them. And little by little these egoisms become atrophied.

I remember how one day Doctor Nikitin, Julia Ivanovna, and I sat in the Remington room and talked about the War. Nikitin wondered whether it was possible, although completely refusing to approve killing, to go to war as a physician or a nurse. Father entered. "What is this about?" he asked. We told him. "If I were young," he said, "I would go to the War as a hospital worker."

But it was never permitted him to express his immediate, fleeting thoughts or feelings outright, even in his own family circle. Whoever was present hastened to catch his words on the wing and give them to the press. Conservatives, patriotically-minded people rejoiced. "Even Tolstoy is seized with patriotism, despite his 'non-resistance'!"

Two young ladies came to see father. They were going to the War as nurses and asked father's opinion as to whether they were doing right. He said that, in his opinion, one should not take part in killing in any form whatsoever. The young ladies were surprised and tried to prove to him that this was necessary, that there would be wounded people, whether they wanted it or not, and that they must be tended.

"Confess," father said to them, "that you have a desire for heroic deeds, a desire to distinguish yourselves. Why is it that you want to devote yourselves to people precisely over there on battlefields? Why

don't you go into some God-forsaken village to help the millions of suffering people who are dying from disease, from filth, from under-nourishment? Why? Because this would be drab, uninteresting work, because you would not surprise anyone by doing that."

Newspapers and magazines sometimes failed or pretended not to understand father's meaning, in order to have occasion to print his explanation and then inquire as to his opinion about the Russo-Japanese War. Thus one American paper asked: "Whom does Tolstoy favor, Russians or Japanese?" To which father answered:

"I am neither for Russia nor for Japan, but for the working people of both countries who are deceived and forced by the Government to go to war against their conscience, their religion and their own good."¹

"Amazing," father used to say. "Christianity forbids killing, and so does Buddhism. And yet here are two peoples professing religions which forbid killing that are hatefully killing, drowning, and maiming each other."

Father could not remain indifferent to the War, and, postponing for a time his work on the *Cycle of Reading*, wrote his article "Come Back to Reason!"

But only some half-literate peasants, in remote corners of Russia, understood the teaching of Christ as father understood it. They never asked him whom he favored, Russians or Japanese; they simply refused to take up arms and go to war. They did it without showing off, without thinking of the consequences. And the consequences were terrible: they were thrown into prisons, sent to disciplinary battalions, flogged, tortured.

The Japanese Socialist paper *Heimin Shimbun Sha* printed, in August, 1904, an article in English by the well-known Japanese Socialist, Iso Abe. Father began a correspondence with him and wrote him, among other things, that he regretted the fact that Iso Abe was a Socialist; to which the Japanese replied that, although he was a Socialist, he was, nevertheless, an advocate of peaceful evolution, and that, in his communications with Russian revolutionaries, he always tried to dissuade them from violence.

The revolutionaries caused father much dismay. I remember one typical case. We were sitting at lunch. Father came up the steps, panting.

"Oh, Lord! Lord! It was horrible! I said to him, 'You cannot improve the people's lot by violence,' and he interrupted me with such immense assurance: 'You are mistaken! Not that we cannot—we

1. Paul Biriukov, *Biography*.

must! We must destroy without pity all those who exploit the people!' Who was he? A schoolboy, about seventeen years old. What hatred! What hatred! I began telling him of the law of God, of the teaching of Christ—'It's all foolishness,' he interrupted me, 'there is no God!' I could not contain myself, I was angered by that boundless self-assurance. 'What did you come to me for,' I said to him, 'if you know it all so well yourself?' and I left the room."

I seldom saw father so angered. His face was flushed, he breathed quickly, walking up and down the room and sighing.

Father felt the approach of the revolution. The temper of the workers, soldiers, and peasants was clear to him, not only from conversations he had with the people but also from the endless letters that came to him from every corner of Russia. He knew of the discontent that grew more intense every day, he knew that the Japanese War, which nobody needed, to which hundreds of thousands of men were driven to be killed, was straining the people's patience to the utmost.

It was perfectly clear to him that the revolution would not improve the people's lot, and it was perhaps for this reason that he repeatedly addressed the Government warning it of the impending bloodshed. The form of government was, in his opinion, of no importance; all governmental power was based on violence, and all governmental power, therefore, was wrong.

The new government will be just as much based on violence as was the old. Just as Cromwell and Marat crushed their adversaries, so a new government in our country would crush the conservatives, the *Novoye Vremia*, and others. And if I were to choose, perhaps I'd rather choose Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich after all—he is a thief who has made his pile and would not be stealing so dreadfully hereafter.²

In his article, "To the Government, the Revolutionaries, and the People," father wrote:

If the living conditions of the people are to improve, it is imperative that people themselves should improve. This is as much of a truism as to say that, in order to warm a quantity of water, every molecule of that water must get warm. And for people to improve, it is necessary that they pay more and more attention to themselves, to their inner life. As to the external public activity, especially the social struggle, it always diverts people's attention from the inner life, and therefore, always inevitably corrupting people, it lowers the level of public morals, as has always been the case everywhere, and as we see manifested so flagrantly at present in

2. D. P. Makovitsky, *Yasnopolianskiye Zapiski*, Vol. II.

Russia. Lowering of public morals causes the lowest social elements to come more and more to the top; and a moral public opinion becomes established, which permits, and even approves, crime. And thus a vicious circle of falsehood is created: the inferior elements of society, being called to the top, take up with fervor public activity which corresponds to their own low moral level; and this activity, in turn, attracts to itself still lower social elements.

When a Tula peasant asked father: "How much longer shall the many millions of gray blouses pull the overturned cart?" father replied: "They have got to leave it alone, this overturned cart—leave it alone, and let whoever else is willing pull it. Who will fight wars, work for estate owners, sow, plow, work in the factories, if the peasants and the workers refuse to do it?"

The events of January 9, 1905,³ moved father very deeply. He spoke of the senselessness of what had been done and blamed the political agitators.

The Tsar could not possibly have received fifteen thousand workers; the dark benighted mob might not have understood it, but those who led it could not but understand.

The crime committed at Petrograd is horrible. It is triply revolting: because the Government orders people to be killed, because the soldiers shoot their brethren, and because dishonest agitators, for their own base ends, lead simple people to death. I do not blame the people, but I have not enough words to express my aversion for those who deceive them.⁴

The general public temper was restless, strained, rumors circulated that revolution was about to break out any day, disorders were expected at Moscow and other cities.

Aunt Tatiana, her eldest daughter, and I returned from Petrograd with much news of what was going on in the capitals. Father listened to us, fascinated and anguished.

On the evening of February 3, when I was in Moscow, a terrific explosion sounded from the neighborhood of the Kremlin. People said that Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich had been killed with a bomb. The explosion was so powerful that his body could not be gathered up; it had been torn to shreds.

"Horrible! Horrible!" father repeated, wincing with pain as I told him that on the way back from Moscow a group of students in the railway car spoke of the assassination of Sergei Alexandrovich as the

3. The shooting down of workers who marched peacefully toward the Winter Palace in Petrograd, intending to hand a petition to the Tsar.

4. D. P. Makovitsky, *op. cit.*, Vol. II.

first signal for the beginning of revolution. "Good work! A clean job! To a dog, a dog's death!" they remarked.

"Ah, my God!" father moaned. "How can they not understand that by hatred and cruelty they will only create more cruelty, and there will be no end to it?"

Auntie spoke with indignation of the disorders and strikes in the factories, while father became gloomier and gloomier.

I told him of my cousin Alexander Behrs who, during these events, was assigned to guard the bridges with some of his Preobrazhensky soldiers. A girl student walked up to him and began to curse him, calling him executioner, gendarme, tsar's henchman. My cousin was patiently silent. Then she spat at him. Not wanting to arrest her, he bent down, seized her, laid her across his saddle and spanked her. I thought this very funny.

"Ah, how can you, how can you laugh?" father said, knitting his brows. "What can be more horrible than this hate and discord among people?"

More and more often people asked father's opinion of revolution, asked him trifling, thoughtless questions. Some revolutionaries, without even taking the trouble to open a book and acquaint themselves with his opinions, having merely grasped something from hearsay—such as his negative attitude to church and state—jumped to the conclusion that Tolstoy was their man and expected him to be in sympathy with their work. Others, who knew his opinions well, glossed over what did not suit them and, wishing to use Tolstoy's influence to the advantage of their particular cause, helped to distribute some of his works. "I do not like to have my 'Soldier's Notebook' sold in the streets," father said. "I would like people to accept my ideas as a whole but not to use part of them for ends that are indifferent to me."⁵

But when father showed a desire to remain aloof, people blamed him for that, too.

I am being called an adherent of Katkov's⁶ camp. But in this time of trial each should preserve his own ego. What I stand for is God, and not government or liberals. People neglect the one and only thing in which they do have freedom of choice: their inner life. They keep planning how they would make others happy, but forget about their own spiritual life. Living as I do fortunately away from this struggle, I go on, in the very interests of the liberation of humankind, preserving and developing my ideas which will be of use later, when their time comes.⁷

5. S. A. Tolstoy's Notebook.

7. D. P. Makovitsky, *op. cit.*, Vol. II.

6. A reactionary journalist.

In May, came the report of the loss of our fleet; in October, we learned of the Kronstadt mutiny. Then, all at once, railway whistles died down; and, as if a central wire had been cut, all railway traffic stopped, all trains—freight and passenger alike. There was something weird and exciting in that. Passengers roamed around Kozlovka station, not knowing what to do with themselves. One after the other, village women trekked to the station with bundles, seizing the chance to sell milk, eggs, and butter at triple prices.

I was at Tula on the day when the manifesto granting the constitution was declared. One could not make one's way through Kiev-skaia Street, it was so crowded. Endless throngs walked the streets, there were shouts of "Hurrah!" a doubled police force kept order, and it was not clear whether people were rejoicing at the constitution or whether new disorders were about to flare up.

Elections to the State Duma began. Unexpectedly, my brother-in-law, M. S. Sukhotin, was elected deputy. Some years previously, he had been nobility alderman in the Novosiltsov district, but later had entirely abandoned public activity, and it was not clear why the choice had fallen on him. When he returned from Petrograd, he described to us the "Black Hundred"⁸ types and the representatives of the labor parties with their intolerant and bold manner.

"What an abhorrent type of industrial worker is developing," father used to say, listening to these tales and becoming more and more confirmed in his opinion that nothing would come of the Duma. "And what a great sin is this orgy of talking! On this fruitless arguing, buffoonery and shouting, millions of the people's money are spent!"

Mikhail Sergeyevich did not argue and only smiled good-naturedly, agreeing with father in his heart. But my eldest brother, Sergei, always argued, being convinced that the welfare of Russia depended on the change in government.

"You keep talking of constitutional monarchy, of Purishkevich being for absolute monarchy and the revolutionaries for socialism, and every one of you believes he can arrange the nation's life. But I assure you that not until every man tries to live a good life, not interfering with that of others, will the people's life improve!"

"But there must be some way to limit those in power! You know that you, too, are horrified at the Government throwing people into prisons, executing them wholesale—"

8. The name given to a group of reactionaries who took part in the persecution of Jews, students and Socialists.

"And so it will continue to do. The form does not matter."

Mikhail Sergeyevich told us how the State Duma deputies once came out into the garden of the Taurida Palace, and how, seeing the gardeners mowing the grass, a few deputies of the Left took the scythes from their hands.

"All right—let's see which side will beat the other!" cried Stakhovich,⁹ taking off his coat. And no Socialist could manage to keep pace with Stakhovich when he gathered speed; they sweated and panted, to the accompaniment of jokes from the rest of the deputies and the gardeners: "How could they! They are only peasant representatives!"

"This is most striking! Most striking!" father exclaimed, through his laughter. "What kind of peasants are they, anyway? They are a motley crowd that got into the Duma by chance and now undertake to decide the fate of the Russian nation. Not a single real, honest peasant will ever engage in politics; it would be foreign and distasteful to him!"

Sometimes father read the papers, keeping track of political events; sometimes he did not touch them for months at a stretch.

"Newspapers are worse than drugs or tobacco; the harm of civilization is clearly seen from newspapers," he would say. "Every day big sheets of paper are filled with any conceivable hash. They print the unnecessary, criminal talking in the Duma, and the clownish pranks and hateful speeches of the Left; they attack each other, they justify crime and murder."

Sometimes, upon entering the drawing-room and hearing political conversation, father involuntarily took part in it but almost always cut himself short and quickly retired to his room.

It was much later that father became interested in the Duma in connection with his idea of introducing Henry George's single tax.

"Last night I spoke with Maklakov,"¹⁰ he once told us, "about introducing the Henry George system through the State Duma."

"What happened?"

"Well, he answered me so vaguely that I believe nothing will come of it. The chief thing is that he does not believe in it himself."

Another time, father spoke of it to the Duma deputy Chelyshev who came to talk with him about his campaign against drinking. But

9. A conservative deputy and estate owner, and friend of the family.

10. Vasili Alexeyevich Maklakov, a well-known liberal, lawyer, and deputy to the Duma. He was later Ambassador to France under the Kerensky Provisional Government.

Chelyshev, too, confirmed Maklakov's opinion that the reform could not be introduced. This ended father's interest in the Duma.

He was writing his article "The One Thing Needed." In it he appealed for an end to violent acts, murder, and hate—but what weight could his words carry? People were busy with big things—political and social—settling the destinies of the Russian nation. How childlike the dreams of introducing a "single tax" seemed to them, how ironically they listened to talk about not resisting evil by violence.

CHAPTER XIII

"THE JOY THAT IS PERFECT"

I AM inclined to think that Masha was the only person in our family to whom father's wishes were sacred. This may have been why such painful relations developed between her and mother. Many years later, when it fell to my lot to carry out father's written will and when I had to hear so many bitter words and face so many insults from the family, I often thought of Masha and of how much easier it all would have been if she were living.

Although she disapproved of my flightiness and considered me insufficiently grounded in father's opinions, Masha felt in her heart that my attachment to him was becoming stronger and deeper with years and forgave me a great deal for that.

The rift which I indistinctly felt to exist in my parents' mutual relations became real to me after several conversations with Masha; and, as the years went by, I understood more and more what a very deep abyss separated them. I remember Masha's calling me as I was passing through the drawing-room. She was worried and agitated and told me that mother was writing a post-dated diary, using father's diary and interpreting the events and moods noted there to suit herself.

I did not understand her at once.

"What for?" I asked.

"That's the point. What for? For the purpose of having people read this diary of hers later on and believe father an evil man, an egoist who shifted the whole burden of business, of the household and estate, of the family affairs on her—and mother a martyr."

"Oh, but we must prevent this in some way or other!" I exclaimed. "How can we permit such a thing?"

"And how can you prevent it?" Masha asked with a sorrowful smile. "We must just remember—the two of us—that everything is not true in these records."

This I never forgot. And whenever mother spoke of her diaries, of her "History of My Life," I remained coldly and hostilely silent. She often said that she must justify herself to future generations, that she was going to deposit her diaries in the Rumiantsev Museum on condition that they be printed fifty years after her death, and that people would then know how she had suffered and how cruel and unjust

father had been to her. In spite of—and perhaps precisely because of—mother's constant insistence that everything must be preserved and noted down, that it would be of interest later on; and because she ascribed immense importance to what later generations would think and say, the thought of these later generations was most irritating to me, and I made few records in my own diary—only when something touched me very deeply or when I was in love.

Another time, Masha, with a mysterious air, called me into father's study.

"Under this chair—do you see the torn lining there?—is a letter. Papa asked me, if anything happens,"—Masha did not say what—"to give it to Uncle Seriozha. If Kolia and I are no longer here to do it, will you?"

"And to whom is the letter written?" I asked, overcome with a feeling of the importance and mystery of the commission Masha intrusted to me.

"I don't know," she said.

Curiosity tormented me but I did not dare to ask any further questions, and it may be that Masha really did not know what was under the torn lining of that armchair.

When Masha was no longer living, her husband, Nikolai Obolensky, reminded father of the letter in the chair, as he had heard that mother intended to have the upholstery on the study furniture changed. Father took out the letters—there were two of them—and gave them to Nikolai Obolensky, asking him to preserve them and to give them to mother after father's death. Obolensky did that and told me years after that she read one of the letters and immediately tore it into small bits. The contents of the second letter I learned much later. I never suspected until then that so long ago father had been thinking of leaving home.

DEAR SONIA:

I have long been tormented by the inconsistency of my life with my beliefs. To compel all of you to change your mode of life, your habits to which I myself had accustomed you in the first place, I am unable; I have felt, so far, equally unable to go away and leave you, thinking that in so doing I would deprive the children, while they were still young, of that influence, even if slight, which I could have upon them, and that it would cause you all grief. But I can no longer continue living as I have lived for sixteen years, sometimes struggling against and irritating you, sometimes succumbing to the familiar temptations which surround me all the time; and I have now decided to do what I have long wanted to do—go away.

First, because this life is becoming more and more of a burden to me, and as my years increase I long more and more for solitude, and second because since the children are grown up, my influence is no longer needed in the house and all of you have more vital interests which will make you feel my absence less. But the principal thing is that just as the Hindus, when they approach their sixtieth year, retire to the woods, just as any aged and religious man wishes to devote the last years of his life to God and not to jokes, puns, gossip, and tennis—so I, on entering my seventieth year, long with my whole soul for peace, solitude, and if not complete harmony then at least not such crying discord between my life and my beliefs and conscience. If I were to carry out my plan openly, there would be entreaties, reproaches, arguments and complaints, and I might weaken and perhaps not carry out my intention—and yet it must be carried out. And therefore please forgive me if my action hurts you, forgive me, all of you, in your hearts; and chiefly you, Sonia, let me go with good will; do not search for me, do not complain, and do not condemn me.

That I leave you does not prove that I am dissatisfied with you. I know that you were unable, literally unable, and are still unable to see and feel as I do, and therefore could not and cannot change your life and make sacrifices for the sake of something of which you are not conscious. Therefore I do not blame you, but on the contrary I think with love and gratitude of the thirty-five years of our life together, especially the first half of that period when you, with the motherly self-sacrifice which is characteristic of you, bore so energetically and firmly what you considered your calling. You have given me and the world what you were able to give, a great deal of motherly love and self-sacrifice, and I cannot but appreciate that. But in the last period of our life—the last fifteen years—we have grown apart. I cannot think myself to blame, because I know that I have changed not for my own sake or for other people's but because I could not do otherwise. Nor can I blame you for not following me, but thank and remember you and shall always remember with love all that you have given me.

Farewell, dear Sonia.

Your loving
LEV TOLSTOY

July 8, 1897.¹

But father did not go away; though, as he himself confessed, life became more and more difficult for him. City life was particularly trying for him at that time, when he was engrossed in religious and philosophical reflections. But mother always insisted that father should join her and the little ones in Moscow.

A few months later father wrote to sister Tania:

1. Biriukov, *Biography*.

You speak of my refusal to come to Moscow. I think of the matter every day, a hundred times a day and long at a time, and yet cannot make up my mind. To return to that tormenting life, unworthy and idle, abandoning my fruitful solitude when I have so little time left me to live and work, would be a kind of spiritual suicide—and to what purpose?

I know that this makes mama suffer, and I should like to help her. But I know, on the other hand, that my coming to Moscow would not help her; she would suffer in some other way, and I would injure myself—or rather injure that something which is in me but does not belong to me. I keep thinking and wish to decide this question not for myself but as though I were standing before God.²

I knew that there were many grounds for discord between my parents—the manner of our upbringing, life in Moscow, luxuries—but the arguments occurred most often on the subject of author's rights to father's works.

I remember that, while I was still a young girl, father granted the right of publishing "The Worker and the Master" to the *Severny Vestnik*, a prominent monthly, and that mother was angry, cried, and reproached him. At that time, I imagined that all the trouble was due to Mme Gurevich, whom mother called "a pushing Jew," who knew how to beg from father his consent to the deal.

In 1895, father set down something like a written will in his diary, where he requested his wife and children to make his writings public property. "The fact that my works have been for sale these last ten years has been most painful to me," he wrote.

Masha made three copies of that will. She gave one to father to sign and leave with her, and the two other copies to brother Sergei and to Chertkov for safe keeping. One of my brothers learned about this will and told mother and her whole wrath descended upon Masha. She called her a lying, insincere person and blamed her for having secretly given the will to father to sign. Masha kept control of herself, and tried to explain that the paper in question had no legal value and that the whole family knew father's wishes, anyway. But mother would not listen and continued to shout. She even reminded Masha that after first refusing her share of the fortune she had again taken it "in order to be able to keep a beggar husband" and reproached her with being a pharisee.

Leaving Masha, mother ran to father. A tempestuous scene took place between them. Evidently he refused to destroy the document because mother continued to be agitated, shouted, cried, threatened

2. Tolstoy's letters to T. L. Tolstoy: *Sovremennye Zapiski*, Paris, 1928.

to kill herself. Father began to suffer from heart palpitations. Masha, knowing that mother would not cease tormenting him until she had had her way, and concerned about his health, surrendered the document.

In her diary of October, 1902, mother gives the following explanation of this event:

When, according to the wish and the judgment of Lev Nikolayevich, division of property took place in our family, daughter Masha, who was then already of age, renounced her share in her parent's inheritance then and forever. Knowing her insincere and inconsistent nature, I did not believe her but took her share in my own name and for this share wrote a will in her favor. But my death did not occur: instead Masha married Obolensky, a beggar, and took her share back in order to keep herself and him. Having no rights whatsoever for the future, she, for some reason, secretly copied from her father's diary of 1895 a number of his wishes concerning the time after his death. Among other things, it was written there that the sale of his works distressed him and that he did not wish his family to sell them even after his death.

When in July of last year, 1901, Lev Nikolayevich was dangerously ill, Masha, without anyone's knowledge, gave this paper she had copied from his diary to him to sign; which he did, being ill.

This was extremely annoying to me when I accidentally learned of it. To make the works of Lev Nikolayevich *common* property, I believe would be wrong and senseless. I love my family and wish it the best of fortunes, but, by surrendering the writings to common possession, we would only have given a prize to rich publishing firms like Marx, Zeitlin (Jews), and others. I told L.N. that if he died before me, I should *not* fulfill his desire and should *not* renounce the rights to his works, and that, had I believed this a good and just act, I should have given him the joy of relinquishing the rights *during his lifetime*, and that after his death it would no longer have any meaning for him.

And so now, having undertaken the publishing of the works of Lev Nikolayevich according to his wishes, having retained the right of publication, and having refused to sell this right to anyone³ in spite of large sums being offered to me for it, I began to resent—as I had before—Masha's having in her hands a paper signed by Lev Nikolayevich to the effect that he would not wish to have his works sold after his death. I did not know precisely the contents of this paper and asked Lev Nikolayevich to take it from Masha and give it to me.

He very willingly did so and handed me the paper. Here a thing hap-

3. Countess S. A. Tolstoy possessed only a power of attorney to conduct the publishing business, according to which she was not legally able to sell the rights to the works.

pened which I did not expect in the least: Masha became furious, her husband shouted at me yesterday the Lord only knows what, saying that Masha and he intended to *publish* this paper after the death of Lev Nikolayevich and to make it known to the largest possible number of people, so that all should know that his wife sold Lev Nikolayevich's works against his wish.

It was autumn. The transparent foliage of the birches became even thinner and single bright yellow twigs stood out in the dark, dense green of the linden trees. Fallen leaves rested like brilliant spots on the clear, black surface of the ponds.

Father, Masha, and I walked in silence down the birch lane to the lower pond. A deep feeling of tenderness bound us together; and whether it was from that, or because father seemed so worn out, we felt very sad and he, as if guessing our mood, spoke of life being a joy, and said that it is our own fault if we are not conscious of it.

"One thinks sometimes how happy one would be if some of the external conditions of life could be changed, if one could go away somewhere, or if a certain person would recover sight again, or if one recovered youth and could begin life anew. Then one would be quite, quite happy—Ah, but that is not so. Very often our life changes according to our desires—yet when one burden has vanished another and another are there waiting to take its place. We must—"

"Like Saint Francis of Assisi—" Masha interrupted him.

"Yes—yes—how wonderfully you always understand everything!" father exclaimed. "Yes, when you are persecuted and insulted, then it is that you know the joy that is perfect."⁴

His voice trembled. I could not look at his suffering, wept, and ran away. And in the evening, Masha asked me:

"What was the matter, 'Alexandropolis'? Why did you start howling—were you perhaps jealous of father and me?"

"Oh, what are you saying?" I exclaimed. "No, I am sorry for him, he is tortured, he suffers."

And I cried again.

4. ". . . And when we come to Porciuncula, dirty, wet, numb with cold, and hungry, and ask to be let in, and the doorkeeper says to us: 'What makes you vagabonds wander all over the world, tempting people and stealing the alms that are meant for poor men? Away with you!' and refuses to open; if then we do not feel offense at the doorkeeper but think with humility and love that he is right, that God must have directed him to act toward us as he did; and we stay, wet, cold and hungry, in the snow and water until the morning, without a murmur against the doorkeeper, then, brother Leo, and only then will our joy be perfect." *Cycle of Reading*, Vol. II.

CHAPTER XIV

MY SCHOOL. DUSHAN PETROVICH

AN important event took place in our family in November, 1905: a daughter was born to Tania. She returned a short time before that from Switzerland, where she had stayed at a sanatorium—the reason, perhaps, why this time her child was born living.

I dropped into the "maid's room" that morning. Nania, her lips pressed together meaningfully, sat at the window and sewed; and Tania was walking up and down the room. Her face had a concentrated and excited expression, and the muscles near her mouth twitched slightly from time to time.

"Tania!" I exclaimed, "has it begun?"

But I had not finished speaking when I understood that I should not have asked. Tania looked at me reproachfully.

I went to my room. I heard Tania go back to her room "under the vault"—father's former study—and the midwife follow her. The entire household waited silently and tensely. An hour, or maybe an hour and a half, passed. I was walking back and forth before Tania's door when somebody said:

"A daughter born to Tatiana Lvovna!"

I ran to father's room, but he must have felt it, he was already coming downstairs.

"Papa, Tania has a daughter!"

"Why do you cry, silly?" he asked, and walked back, blowing his nose and wiping his tears.

The parish school at Yasnaia Poliana was very poor. In the winter of 1891, my sisters had taught village children in the stone lodge next to the old-time entrance gates, and, as a seven-year-old, I used to run up there to study with them. But the Tula governor warned my sisters that if they would not of their own accord stop teaching the children, he would be obliged, in his official capacity, to close down the little school.

Presently, as if to counterbalance the influence of Tolstoy, a number of parish schools were opened in our district. They were very poor, both as to housing and teaching. At Yasnaia Poliana, a tiny schoolhouse with one room was built, with a stove stupidly placed in the

middle, a low ceiling, and small windows. It housed, with difficulty, some thirty or forty pupils, and the peasants, obliged to choose candidates because there was not room for all the children, gave preference to boys; they reasoned that boys needed "reading and writing" more than the girls did, and, besides, a school certificate gave a boy a certain advantage when he was drafted into the army. The teachers were usually of clerical descent;¹ their own education often amounting to but four years of school. The peasants complained that the school was bad, that the children were beaten or made to kneel on dry peas for punishment. And the pupils never learned to read, write, or count well. All this gave me the idea of teaching girls. In the former painting shop where Tania had once painted with "Grandpa Gay" and Repin, I arranged a school, and gathered about twenty or twenty-five girl pupils. I did not have any very extensive plans. I only wanted to teach reading, writing, and counting. At that time, practically all the women in our village were illiterate.

I got up early in the morning, had my coffee, and ran to the school. The little girls were waiting for me, we started a fire in the stove, and sat down to study.

One day, as I was going to the school, father asked me, "Do you ever have mornings when you find it difficult to get up, when you don't feel like working, and are tired of it?"

"No," I replied without thinking. But the next moment father's question reached deeper into my mind. "Yes," I admitted, "sometimes I don't like to go—I have to force myself."

"Ah! Well, if that is so, it's good. That is a sign that it is real work, not playing, not a toy. Well, run along, run along," he said, smiling and nodding, and went on.

I did not know anything of teaching methods, but invented my own, and there were days when I could not get the best out of my girls. I was never taken aback by their pranks, laughter, or whispers, but the thing I feared was boredom in the classroom. One would yawn, then another, until the whole class was yawning, gnawing at their pencils, dangling their legs, answering nonsensically, their eyes glassy and unthinking.

It was at one such low moment that my father called on us. Quickly glancing over the girls, he sensed their mood at once. They stood up to greet him, sat down again, and gazed at him curiously.

1. The clergy in Russia had become to a certain degree like a caste, most marriages being concluded within the group. It was possible in many cases to tell a person of clerical descent from certain traits of culture and custom.

"What are you having now?"

"Arithmetic."

I gave father the book.

"What is this? A book of problems? You don't need that. Well, now listen, girls. A herd was grazing along the banks of the Voronka: sixty cows and thirty-two sheep. One herdsman and two herdsman's helpers were looking after them. How many legs did they have, counting them all?"

One problem led to another. The girls woke up, vied with one another in answering. The school became noisy and merry; the children seemed changed. As he was leaving, father praised them—"Good girls! You count very well!"

After that he came to my school often. The girls became used to him, and some who were a little bolder than the rest cried as he went out, "Come again, Lev Mikolayevich!"

At butter week¹ he said: "Why don't you treat your girls to *bliny*? When I taught school,² we used to have *bliny* during butter week, and then we harnessed the horses and went sleigh riding. The youngsters enjoyed it."

I took his advice. The cook raised an immense amount of dough for the *bliny*. The girls came dressed up in new sarafans,³ their hair oiled and combed smooth. They were timid, tried to be on their very best behavior and refused second helpings of *bliny*.

Alexander Nikiforovich Dunayev was visiting us just then. He and I took turns baking the pancakes. In his shirt sleeves, hot and red, "Nikiforych" adroitly maneuvered the pan holder, setting in the pans and then pulling them out of the stove with brown-cheeked pancakes. The girls sat, mannerly and quiet, at the table on which stood plates with salt herring, sour cream, and drawn butter. Gradually they felt a little more at home and forgot their shyness.

"Hey, a *blin* for me!" one would call, holding out an empty plate with a hand dripping with butter and sour cream. They chewed with loud smacking, earnestly, as if doing important work. Father dropped in for a minute, stood there smiling, and went back to his room.

We had fewer visitors in winter than in summer. I liked this time when we remained alone except for Julia Ivanovna Igumnova, who

2. During the week preceding Lent, church canons forbid meat, which, in common usage, is interpreted as an excuse for eating unwholesome quantities of meatless delicacies, particularly *bliny*—yeast-raised pancakes served with smoked or salt fish, caviar, sour cream, and drawn butter.

3. At Yasnaia Poliana, 1859-62.

4. Peasant dresses.

was like a member of the family, and our doctor. Nikitin had come back to us for a short time and then his place was taken by Berkenheim, a dear, kind-hearted man. But he, too, stayed only a short time, and the doctor's place at Yasnaia Poliana was taken by Dushan Petrovich Makovitsky.

In Slovakia—his native country—Dushan Petrovich, together with a friend, Shkarvan, had stood at the head of the movement for propagating Tolstoy's teaching, had translated and published father's books, and more than once had come to Yasnaia Poliana to speak with father. Shkarvan even refused to do military service and was punished for it.

I believe it was Masha who had the idea of asking Dushan Petrovich to stay with us as our physician. He agreed. He went back to Slovakia, informed his family of the proposal, took leave of them and returned to Yasnaia Poliana, where he remained to the end of father's life.

Father used to say of him:

"Dushan is a saint. But since there are no real saints in existence, God gave him a fault too: hatred of Jews."

That was true. Dushan Petrovich's kind face assumed a stubborn and embittered expression whenever the conversation touched upon the Jews. He liked the *Novoye Vremia* and its famous staff writer, Menshikov, because he abused Jews; and once in a while he tried, inconspicuously, to leave one of these articles where father would notice it. Dushan Petrovich never bought anything from Jews and censured me if I went into Jewish stores.

"Oh, Alexandra Lvovna, Alexandra Lvovna! Shame, shame!" he would say on such occasions. "And why should you buy from Jews? Why not support your own people, you know that the Jews hate you—they will sit on your neck some day."

Our dispensary, which was somewhat neglected after the departure of Dmitri Vasilievich Nikitin, came to life again under Dushan Petrovich. He at once established regular reception hours and never refused to call on the sick.

I helped him at first, and this time father did not object, but I did not like Dushan Petrovich's methods of treatment—it seemed to me that he was a poor physician. Furthermore, the patients could not understand his speech at first. Later, he learned Russian better but always put the accent in the wrong place. We made fun of this, and then he developed a manner of talking without putting any definite accent anywhere.

Dushan Petrovich gave very few medicines to his patients.

"Please give him more chocolate!" he said to one village *baba* who



Tolstoy at Yasnaya Polyana



Tolstoy and Dushan Petrovich Makovitsky

had brought in an anemic child. The woman gaped at him in bewilderment.

"If you'd only give me some drops, dear master—or maybe some powders—" she said timidly.

"Please give him more chocolate," Dushan Petrovich obstinately repeated, with his rhythmical Slovak accent. I had to intervene and explain to him that not only did the woman never eat any chocolate herself but that she had probably never seen any in her life, and that in any case she could not afford to buy it for the child.

Dushan Petrovich then advised a different remedy.

"Feed him peas. Make pea soup for him!"

"And how about some powders—won't you give me any for him—?"

"Next! Who is next?" the doctor called, paying no more attention to the nonplussed baba.

Once a peasant woman with whose family we were very friendly fell ill. I went with Dushan Petrovich to call on her. The woman had a bad cough so he gave her a quantity of Dover's powder, and said, "Please take a little on the point of a knife three times a day." I tried to persuade Dushan Petrovich that it would have been advisable to divide the powder into doses, but he said, "Not necessary. Understand"—he turned to the patient again—"take a little, on the point of a knife."

Next morning the woman's daughter ran to me in tears.

"What's happened?"

"Mother's sleeping and sleeping, we can't wake her up!"

I ran to their house. The woman was in a profound stupor. I shook her awake, but she immediately fell asleep again. I hurried for Dushan Petrovich. After we brought the baba back to life, I asked her if she had taken any of the medicine Dushan Petrovich had given her.

"Why, I guess I've taken pretty nearly all of it. Who can tell about them things? I thought to myself I'll take more and I'll get well quicker."

One evening, as we were walking home from the dispensary, Dushan Petrovich said gloomily:

"Alexandra Lvovna, I am a very bad man. Very bad! I have sinned again today."

I laughed. That day a woman with an itch had come to us. While Dushan Petrovich was preparing a remedy, she kept scratching herself.

"Please do not scratch," the doctor said to her.

But in a minute the baba, forgetting herself, again scraped the itching spots with her finger nails. Then Dushan Petrovich gave her a slap on the hand.

"I won't, I won't any more, my dear one, don't be angry, it itches so terribly—" the baba apologized, not in the least offended.

Dushan Petrovich soon became indispensable in the house—but not as a physician—whenever one of us was seriously ill, we called Nikitin, Berkenheim, or Shchurovsky. Dushan Petrovich became an important helper to father. In composing his *Cycle of Reading*, father had to do a great amount of reading, marking off with a pencil what was to go into his collection. Dushan Petrovich always remembered what books were to be secured from the library, what others had to be written for. He also helped with the visitors, trying, as a physician, to spare father unnecessary exertion, and, as his follower, explaining to some people his ideas. Sometimes father asked him to answer letters, which Dushan Petrovich did willingly though always very briefly. But his chief merit was in being an extraordinarily exact chronicler.

Whatever he did, he did conscientiously and with a sort of ponderous determination. There were many who noted down father's sayings: Goldenweiser, Gusev, Bulgakov; but not one did it as exactly, systematically and dispassionately as Dushan Petrovich. I can still see him sitting with a strained, almost weirdly strange and motionless countenance, his bald white head bent low and one hand dropped into his pocket, where he always carried a number of small, sharp pencils and tiny tablets of hard paper. He handled these without looking at them, and took notes without taking his hand out of his pocket.⁵

Seeing him like this, so queer and motionless, I couldn't resist teasing him.

"Dushan Petrovich, I shall tell papa right away that you are taking notes!"

"Alexandra Lvovna! Please don't! Oh, please!"

"I shall tell this minute. Papa!" I called across the table. Dushan Petrovich hastily snatched his hand out of his pocket, blushed and looked at me reproachfully and entreatingly.

"Papa!" I continued, "Dushan Petrovich—" here I made a short pause during which the poor doctor alternately paled and blushed, "Dushan Petrovich received twenty patients today!"

5. The work of Dushan Petrovich Makovitsky is the result of a great and unusually valuable labor. For five years, he noted down father's conversations practically every day and with extraordinary precision. He gave his notes to father's secretary, N. N. Gusev, to edit and publish, and so far N. N. Gusev has published two volumes.

"Very tired, are you?" father asked affectionately.

"Oh, no!" Dushan Petrovich replied with great relief. "Oh, no! I am not tired."

Sometimes father read aloud to us. As soon as he opened a book, Dushan Petrovich ran headlong to his room. If, according to his calculation, the reading was to take seven minutes, he set the alarm clock, lay down and fell dead asleep. In seven minutes, the alarm waked him, he jumped up, returned upstairs, listened and noted down what father was saying about the piece he had read.

Dushan was a weak, anemic man, with not a tinge of color in his face. Work probably tired him very much. In the morning, there was the dispensary, and then sick calls which sometimes meant making scores of versts in a jolting peasant cart, or by sleigh in very cold weather, over abominable roads. The rest of the time he noted down father's conversations and sorted his notes. He worked from dawn till night and it was small wonder if he fell asleep the minute he lay down anywhere at any time. He took advantage of every free minute "to warm his feet"—as he called sleeping—with the foot of his bed placed against the stove.

"You don't sin when you sleep!" Dushan Petrovich used to say.

CHAPTER XV

MOTHER'S ILLNESS. MASHA

MOTHER had long complained of pains and heaviness in the lower abdomen. In August, 1906, she took to her bed. A surgeon from Tula was called and he and Dushan Petrovich diagnosed a tumor of the womb. Masha, Julia Ivanovna, and I took turns nursing her. Her sufferings were intense. The doctors said an operation was unavoidable and asked us to call Professor Snegirev from Alexino, a summer resort on the Oka River in Tula province. Tania and my brothers were notified.

Snegirev came with assistants, a nurse, instruments, and even an operating table. Nearly all the family assembled, and as always when a number of young, healthy and idle people gather, in spite of worry and sorrow, the house became filled with noise, commotion, and animation; conversation, eating, and drinking continued uninterrupted. More than twenty persons sat down at our table. Coachmen had to be sent in time to the station or to town for newcomers; there was a great deal to do.

Unexpectedly, an improvement came in mother's condition; Snegirev decided to postpone the operation, and left. On the following day, the pains returned, more intense than before, and her temperature rose to 104° . The physicians declared that peritonitis was setting in. Again Snegirev came, called by an urgent telegram.

Father often went into mother's room and came out of it in a touched, solemn mood. He wrote in his diary during those days:

Sonia's illness still worse. I felt especially sorry today. But she is touchingly sensible, truthful and kind. I do not want to write of anything else. Three sons are present, Sergei, Andrei and Mikhail, and two daughters, Masha and Sasha. The house is full of doctors. This is trying. Instead of obedience to the will of God and a solemn, religious atmosphere, petty revolt and egoism prevail. My thoughts and feelings today were good. I thank God. I am not living, nor is the whole world in time living; but an immutable universe, hitherto unattainable to me in my world in time, opens to me now. How much easier and clearer this way. And how clear, from this point of view, that death is not an end of something but its full unfolding.

Mother bore her illness with infinite patience and meekness. The

more intense her physical pain, the more she softened and lightened. She did not complain, did not lament her fate, demanded nothing, and only thanked everyone and said something affectionate to everyone. Feeling the nearness of death, she yielded; and all things worldly and small fled from her. Father saw it and wept, not with grief, but with joy. He saw "not an end of something but its full unfolding."

Preparations for the operation were being made by Snegirev, three assistants, and Dushan Petrovich. Snegirev was ill at ease. Operating when peritonitis had already set in, in home surroundings, without special equipment, was risky. At his request, Professor Fenomenov was summoned from Petrograd, but it was not possible to wait for his arrival.

When Snegirev asked father's permission to operate, father replied that in his opinion the operation was unnecessary.

"But if the operation is not made, Sofia Andreyevna will die!"

"Well, do as you choose."

Snegirev was startled by father's reply, my brothers were indignant; but none of them understood that one thing mattered for father: that mother was living and "unfolding."

Before the operation, mother asked for a priest, confessed, took communion, asked forgiveness of the children and the employees, and took leave of all. She wanted to say something good to everyone, and many left her room in tears.

When the operation began, father went into Chapysh and asked that the bell be rung twice if everything was well, and once, if not.

Standing on the stairs, I looked down through the open door and saw all the preparations. The operating table stood in the middle, the whole floor was wet, the physicians in their white coats talked in whispers and moved softly. Mother was carried in and the door shut. I heard her moan, then she was silent. Only the professor's loud voice sounded, at first serene, then nervous and irritated. Suddenly I heard him burst out into vile and indecent swearing.

"... you German mug . . . son of a —, accursed German! . . ."

The catgut which a German dealer had supplied to Snegirev and which he was now using to stitch the wound turned out to be poor in quality, and tore in his hands.

It seemed to me that a very long time had passed when suddenly the door flew open with a bang and the professor, hot and purple in the face, darted out. Somebody hastily threw a warm wrap around him, and led him downstairs. Someone else followed with a bottle of champagne.

The operation was successful. I ran to Chapysh and saw father in the clearing between the oaks.

"Papa, it's all right!"

"Very well—very well!"

I understood that he wished to be alone. On my way home, I met Masha and Ilya; they, too, were going to see father. And at home, I found the doctors examining a huge tumor the size of a baby's head. It had burst in the process of being taken out.

I called on Snegirev. He lay in bed, under several warm covers and slowly sipped the champagne. He seemed altogether comfortable, joked and smiled, but evaded answering any questions on the operation.

For a long time, no one except father was allowed to enter mother's room. A trained nurse from Tula was taking care of her. Doctors Nikitin and Berkenheim came to assist Dushan Petrovich. Mother improved and gained strength little by little. Only the catgut of the "accursed German" caused the internal stitches to break in places, in consequence of which she later suffered from rupture.

Mother resumed her occupations. She played the piano, alone or with Natasha Sukhotina, sewed, busied herself about the house, sometimes went for a visit to Moscow. Material affairs again claimed her entirely. Estate and publishing matters, which had always been such a weight on father's spirit, were resumed.

Sometimes father remembered with deep feeling how beautifully mother bore her pain, how she was tender and kind with all. For the second time in my life, just as after the death of Vanichka, a window opened, let in a stream of light that brightened our life—and closed again.

On a cold November day that same year, Masha, her husband, brother Andrei, and Julia Ivanovna went for a walk. They stood watching a fox near the Voronka. Coming back they faced a strong wind and Masha caught cold. By evening, she had chills and fever. For a long time, we could not find out what was the matter with her. Afanasiev, an army surgeon in whom Kolia had especial confidence was called from Tula. Masha's fever ran so high that she had almost no conscious moments. Doctor Shchurovsky came from Moscow and diagnosed croupous pneumonia. Kolia, Julia Ivanovna, and I took care of her in turn. She could not speak and only moaned feebly like a child. High color glowed on her sunken cheeks, she could not move from utter weakness, and all her body must have been in pain. When

compresses were put on her chest and she had to be raised up or turned, her face contracted with pain and her moaning was louder. Once when I handled her awkwardly, she let escape a little cry and looked at me with reproach; and long, long afterward, remembering that cry, I could not forgive myself that awkward motion.

Masha was slowly burning out. Looking at her, I was constantly reminded of Vanichka—she looked particularly like him now. A devouring, merciless illness very like his was tearing her away from us; and it was clear that struggling against it was futile. Masha's face was important and alien, and it seemed to me that she too, like Vanichka when he lay dead, knew something of great importance, which was inaccessible to us.

Noiselessly, father walked into her room, took her hand, kissed her on the forehead. Kolia and I sat by without looking at each other.

So it continued for nine days. With emaciated, transparent hands, Masha was fingering the edge of the bedcover; her pulse was dying down. And suddenly sweat broke out over her—a sweat for which we had been waiting in vain all those long days! A foolish, unfounded, unreasoning hope overcame me. The fat army physician sat in Dushan Petrovich's room covering his face with one hand.

"Doctor," I cried, running into the room, "Doctor, sweat! She is sweating!"

"Sweat—but not that kind—" the doctor grumbled without raising his head.

We gathered in Masha's room. Father sat by her bed and took her hand. The shielded lamp barely lighted the room. It was still, no one spoke, Masha's weakening breath alone was heard. It was less and less frequent, it was interrupted, and then ceased. Kolia stood at the window suppressing his sobs.

Father wrote in his diary:

November 26. One o'clock at night.

Masha has died. Strange—I did not experience either terror, or fear, or the feeling of anything exceptional taking place; not even pity or sorrow. It seems that I rather believed it proper to excite in myself particular emotion and sorrow, and did so; but in the depths of my heart, I was more serene than when I see someone commit a bad or improper act, not to speak of such an act of my own. Yes, this is an event in the bodily domain and therefore indifferent. I looked at her all the time as she was dying—amazingly quietly. She was, to me, a being whose unfolding came before my own. I watched this unfolding and it was a joy to me. But then a moment came when this unfolding, within the limits accessible to me, ceased;

that is, I could not see it any more. But that which had been unfolding still exists. Where? When? These are questions that have to do with the process of unfolding here but cannot be applied to the true life—which is beyond space and time.

When it was known in the village that Maria Lvovna had died, the women wailed at the tops of their voices; some old women ran to the house and asked permission to watch over her body. Some lamented in the established form, in obedience to custom; others wiped, with their aprons, tears that came from the heart. They whispered among themselves, remembering what she had done for each of them: treated this one for her sickness, worked for another in the field, simply said something pleasant to a third. They took turns sitting day and night at Masha's coffin, until the moment of the funeral. And when she was carried through the village, peasant men and women ran out of the houses and put copper coins into the priest's hand, ordering memorial services for her. She was buried in the graveyard of the church at Kochaki, three versts from Yasnaia Poliana. Father walked with the coffin as far as the gates and then turned back. No one had the heart to follow him, to speak comforting words to him.

I live and often remember Masha's last minutes (I do not like to call her Masha, this simple name is so unbecoming to that being who has gone away from me). She sits, propped up with pillows, and I hold her thin, dear hand and feel how life is going from her, how she is going away. This quarter of an hour is one of the most important and significant times in my life.¹

1. Diary of L. N. Tolstoy, December 29, 1906. Archives of the Tolstoy Museum.

CHAPTER XVI

TOLSTOY'S HELPERS

THIN, ragged, sunburned, and dusty, Alexander Petrovich Ivanov appeared at our house every three or four months. Meeting a member of the household, he dropped a brief "Good day," settled himself in a small room near the kitchen and asked for copying work. It was some time in the eighties that father had picked up in the slums Lieutenant Ivanov, retired. He was an excellent penman and could read father's handwriting very well. But his visits to Yasnaia Poliana always ended in precisely the same manner. A week went by, and another week, perhaps a month. Alexander Petrovich, his spectacles low on his nose, sat and copied cleanly, legibly. Gradually he began to feel at home, called people down occasionally, made demands and grumbled. Now somebody was interfering with his work; again somebody was not showing him proper respect. But generally he was muttering about father.

"He's begun to write such a bad hand," he would say. "You just can't make it out."

Sometimes father spoke to him timidly: "Alexander Petrovich, it seems to me that this paragraph was written differently."

"Yes," Alexander Petrovich growled, "yes, I had to smooth it out. You had written it so awkwardly."

Taking off his spectacles and rubbing his hands as if he felt cold, Alexander Petrovich complained to Ilya Vasilievich, "Lev Nikolayevich's writing is terrible; I have to correct it every once in a while."

Little by little, as he worked, his rags were replaced by decent clothing. Mother unearthed my brother's old things from her coffers and Alexander Petrovich became transfigured. Everything went along beautifully. And then, without warning, he disappeared. He was missing a day, two days. People began to say that he had been seen in the village, drunk as a lord, and that he no longer had his overcoat. The pawnshop got hold first of his newly acquired coat, then his trousers and shoes, and Alexander Petrovich disappeared from sight for a few months. He visited Kiev, Crimea, the Caucasus; he wandered on foot all over Russia. In the last years of father's life, his appearances became less and less frequent and then he was no longer heard from. Probably he died somewhere on the road.

The servant who became most intimate with our family was Ilya Vasilievich Sidorkov, who served father in his last years. I can still remember him as livery lackey with tiers of capelets and top hat, sitting on the box seat next to the coachman when we went to *soirées* or to the theater; or in dress coat and white gloves, silently moving along the shining floors. He noiselessly set father's study in order, afraid to disturb the books and manuscripts, afraid to throw away the smallest scrap of paper. He knew all father's habits. As soon as Lev Nikolayevich left for his morning walk, Ilya Vasilievich went to clean his rooms and tried to finish them before he returned. And no sooner did he see Lev Nikolayevich coming back through the garden than he brought his coffee and mail to his study. At two o'clock, when father's work was concluded but before he even left his room, Ilya Vasilievich was on the alert; he quickly ran downstairs and knocked lightly with a stick on the little window through which dishes were passed from the pantry to the dining-room, calling to the cook: "Semen Nikolayevich, the Count's oatmeal!"

Ilya Vasilievich has lived at Yasnaia Poliana for thirty-seven years.¹ Every day the old man—who is now nearly eighty—softly goes upstairs, winds the big clock on the staircase which strikes the hour with a heavy drawling sound, and, in the drawing-room, turns over a page of the calendar, *Thoughts of Wise People*, which father used to read every morning. He never trusts anyone to take care of father's room, but sweeps it himself with his rag and feather broom. And in the spring he takes out father's winter clothes—coat, sweaters, overcoat, woolen socks, and scarfs—shakes them out, cleans them, and puts them back in the chest with fresh camphor and tobacco.

In the early days father's secretarial arrangements were quite primitive. His copying was done by my mother and sisters, and sometimes by visitors, in their different hands, a single manuscript being divided among several of us. As the years went by, however, the work became better organized.

Tania was the first in the household to use a Remington typewriter; I followed her example and learned to type. This made father's task lighter as the typed pages were, of course, easier to glance over, and there was more space for corrections. Later I learned shorthand. My two sisters organized the correspondence so that all letters written by father were copied in a special book under a copying press, and detailed records were kept of his entire correspondence. In his last years,

1. He is at this writing supervisor of the Museum of Yasnaia Poliana.

an exception was made with regard to Chertkov's letters. This is a painful memory, because it was the cause of a dispute between my father and myself.

Usually, all that he wrote was sent to Chertkov, who saw to it that each new work appeared simultaneously in all the languages in which it was to be brought out, and in all the different places, so that there could be no monopoly of copyright. But once it happened that father sent an article directly to a foreign periodical without notifying Chertkov. I do not remember what the article was, but father was particularly anxious to have it printed as soon as possible, and the process of mailing manuscripts to England, where Chertkov was living at this time, and then having them translated, of course took considerable time. As soon as Chertkov learned of this, he wrote a letter full of reproaches, saying that father had interfered with his publishing plans, that he had broken his agreement, brought confusion into the work, and so forth. Father was chagrined and gloomy. When I learned what the trouble was, I rashly wrote to Chertkov. One day about two weeks later, I noticed, on going into father's study, that he was much upset.

"You see, Sasha," he said to me, smiling sadly, "Chertkov does not wish anyone but me to read his letters, and he wants them sent back to him as soon as I have read them. Please send this letter back to him."

"I won't do it!" I replied.

When I recall now the expression of suffering that came into father's face, my heart turns. But at that moment I was beside myself with indignation.

Father took the letter and laid it aside. "I shall send it back myself," he said.

"But what intolerance!" I protested. "I wrote Chertkov that he had reproached you unjustly, and in reply he orders us to send his letters back, without keeping any record of them!"

I could not calm down all that day. In the evening, I went into father's study for work. "Father," I asked him resolutely, "do you believe Chertkov is right?"

"No," father answered in a sad tone, "he is wrong. And you, too, are wrong because you are angry. Oh, but then—I always want to talk with you as if you were a grown person, and yet I see you are still a silly—"

"Papa, dear," I exclaimed, kissing his hands, "I will not say another word, not a word. Forgive me! Give me the letter, I will send it to him."

I took the letter, sealed it in a new envelope addressed to Chertkov, and sent it back to England.

Julia Ivanovna, Dushan Petrovich, and I were at that time father's principal helpers. In the morning, when I went to work with Dushan Petrovich's patients, Julia Ivanovna sat in her room, humming to herself, and sewed the mail parcels and pasted book-post wrappers. When she left, I usually sat in the Remington room, where I could answer his bells.

At nine o'clock, when father returned from his morning's walk, he drank coffee and read his mail. Letters, with the most diverse contents, came to him from all parts of Russia and from abroad. He generally marked the envelopes in a code of his own: N.A.—no answer; S.N.A.—silly, no answer; B.L.—begging letters; and so on. To some he replied immediately, drafting the answer, especially in the later years, in pencil on the envelope. Often his bad handwriting made it difficult to read these penciled lines, and fearing that I would be unable to decipher them, he sometimes called me in to read the draft to him, fidgeting, sighing, and uttering numerous "Ah's" when he himself could not make out what he had written.

"Lord, Lord!" "Well, leave it, I will try it later," he would say finally, putting the envelope aside. Then I quietly took the letter with me and deciphered it at my leisure—to his complete amazement.

Father could classify the letters at once from their exteriors. The contents of a good, expensive envelope, addressed in a legible, handsome style to "His Excellency Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy," generally turned out to be trifling; but a cheap envelope with a scribbled "To Lev Nikolayevich Tolstov" often contained something interesting.

From nine until two, father stayed in his study and wrote. No one entered the room during that time, for nothing in our household was important enough to warrant such intrusion, and he could work only when there was complete silence around him. Any noise prevented him from concentrating. He often called someone to quiet the dogs that barked under his windows, and the cackling of hens or the crowing of a cock disturbed him. I remember Ilya Vasilievich running around the house and chasing the fowls away with a long switch. When he needed something, father rang a tortoise-shell bell or knocked on the wall with his cherry cane.

He usually wrote at his desk, sitting on a small, low chair which had belonged to Tania when she was a child. As he was a little near-sighted but did not want to wear glasses, he used this low chair so that he need not bend too much. Sometimes he wrote at the round



Tolstoy dictating to his daughter Alexandra



Cherkikov and Tolstoy

table, where he generally read his mail and drank his coffee. If the work progressed too slowly, he laid out a game of patience. When I happened to enter the room at such moments, I was always startled by his concentrated and strained expression, and had the feeling that my coming disturbed not the game of solitaire but something else.

Occasionally, he would call me in the midst of his work. I went in on tiptoe, afraid to interrupt, stopped at the door, and waited. He would go on writing, pouting a little as if he were blowing. Finally, when he had come to a period, he would raise his eyes from under shaggy, overhanging eyebrows and look at me unseeing, forgetting what he had called me in for.

"Ah, yes—take this, copy it." He would hand me several written sheets, and immediately his pen began traveling over the paper again.

Toward two o'clock, father came out into the big hall, walking with a light, easy step. If he smiled cheerfully, this meant that his work had gone well. He always left the sheets on his desk to be copied. I went in, took them, and kept them until the next morning. He wrote mainly on quarter sheets, always trying to make use of scraps of paper which he tore from letters and collected. Sometimes, when he wanted to transpose sentences, instead of placing numbers over them on the sheets, he cut the sheets into strips, saying, "See, Sasha, that you don't spill these. I've cut a lot of noodles today." The "noodles" were numbered in big, angular, illegible figures.

Father wrote in unfinished words, without punctuation; if he punctuated, he always did so in the wrong place. Sometimes he made grammatical errors. "Look how you have written this word today," I would say, pointing to a misspelling. "Really?" he always exclaimed, surprised.

I copied his work on one side of quarter sheets, leaving a margin on the right, and doing over only the pages that were marked up very badly with revisions. Otherwise, there would have been each day more than I could finish typing before the next morning, and besides, father objected to unnecessary use of paper. If all the changes were on one portion of the manuscript sheet, this was copied, the rest cut off and pasted on to the fresh part. I dislike to recall now how I cut up his manuscripts with big shears, but I had no time then to stop to think of it. If he had written a long article, I used to work all the evening, part of the night, and early the following morning, to have it ready to return to him for his next day's session.

When father wrote artistic things, copying was like a holiday for me. I waited impatiently for two o'clock to strike so that I could go in,

gather up the work, and see the next instalment. Before starting to copy, I first read through all that he had written during the morning. There were some things which he dashed off at one stroke of the pen, as it were—"Kornei Vasiliev" and "After the Ball"—and, although he altered minor details in them afterwards, they were all shaped in his mind before he sat down to write. His other manuscripts usually took longer; he revised them endless times, crossing out parts and making changes.

If it happened that I devoted the afternoon to something else, it was impossible for me to finish all the copying for the day during the evening, and I typed late into the night, although father would forbid my working after eleven o'clock if he heard of it. By nine the next morning, I always brought the clean copied sheets to him. He would shake his head, sigh, and smile. At two, when I took up his next piece of work, I would see how much he had really needed what I had typed for him at midnight or early morning. The sheets would again be all marked up.

I remember typing the article "To the Government, the Revolutionaries and the People," making a number of copies and asking Maria Alexandrovna Schmidt to read it back with me. I read the copy aloud and she followed the original. As I wanted to get through, I went very rapidly, without putting any expression into the phrases. But Maria Alexandrovna was so enraptured with the article that I gradually changed my tone and began to read it with feeling. From the next room father entered on tiptoe and, with his hands slipped behind the belt of his blouse, stood in the doorway and listened. I became confused and stopped. "No, no, go on, you read well," father said. And when I had finished, he took the sheets from us, saying, "Give them to me for just a minute," and he left the room with a quick step.

"Well," I said to Maria Alexandrovna, "what do you think, are my ten copies all lost now?" "They are, my dear," she replied. "Your father will correct it all over again."

In another two hours father brought the work back. There was not an unchanged line left in it; the pages were covered with alterations. "Ah, Sasha, Sasha, what have I done, what have I done!" he exclaimed and smiled in confusion.

Sometimes when he asked me to copy an article, I tried to persuade him to let it wait a little. "I am terribly tired of it," father would say. "Go ahead and copy it. Make ten copies."

"Let's wait, papa—you know you will write it all over again. And

if I make ten copies, think of all the paper that will go to waste!" This argument was the most convincing of all.

"Well, perhaps it would be better if I looked it over once more."

The next day he brought it back to me, saying, "No, copy it, I cannot bear to look at it any more!" I typed it, and he altered it again.

Besides the other work, I also copied father's diary. He did not like this idea, but Chertkov asked him to allow it, and he consented. "Take it when I am not there," he would tell me, "so that I will not think about its being typed, because that would interfere with my writing it."

Usually he jotted down his thoughts in a notebook which he carried with him, afterward transferring them to the diary. When tired or unwell, he dictated them to me. One day, he dictated something about time and space being non-existent—being only limits which separate us from the infinite.

"So then it only seems to us that time is passing," I remarked, deep in thought. Father raised his head and looked at me almost in consternation.

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed.

"I must have said something foolish!" I thought, and blushed so that my ears tingled.

"So you are thinking of what I am saying, are you?" he asked.

"Yes, why not?"

"Nothing, nothing," he said, noticing my embarrassment and smiling. "Only I was shocked because now I can't go on dictating to you so freely. I never thought that you were really thinking about what I said!"

"What in the world made me do it?" I thought, angered at myself. "To interrupt him with my foolish questions! Now he won't dictate to me any more!"

Thomas Edison sent a phonograph with a recording mechanism as a present to father. This was the greatest marvel to us. We unpacked it immediately. Chertkov and Biriukov, who were just then visiting us at Yasnaia Poliana, helped to set it up and put it in running order.

One morning, I heard father knock on the wall with his cherry cane, and when I came in he asked me to start the machine. I put the mouthpiece in position, wound up the mechanism, and waited. Father was visibly excited. Writing something down on a scrap of paper, he held himself in readiness, grasping the arms of the chair firmly with both hands, threw his head back and commanded, "All right, let it go!"

The roll turned, father began dictating a letter, but stumbled, at a loss for words. "Stop it, stop it," he whispered frantically, waving his hand. I stopped it. Father thought for several minutes. "All right, go on now," he said. The roll started again, and again father stopped.

"Oh, what a difficult job!" he said. "I get too excited, my heart beats so—and I must have wasted that roll!"

"Why, no," I said to comfort him, "we have used only one quarter of the roll. You can begin again."

"Oh, I'm so tired!" he exclaimed when the letter was finished. "I don't see how people can use this thing! It's all very well for the well-balanced Americans, perhaps, but for us Russians, it's no good."

There was a great deal of secretarial work, but we got it done and enjoyed it. However, in 1907, Chertkov decided that our force must be increased, and he suggested that Nikolai Nikolayevich Gusev, who had visited father and was in correspondence with him, should come to help us. Gusev had all the qualities required of a good secretary: he knew stenography, was considered a follower of father's and could set down other people's thoughts on paper. At first Gusev stayed at Teliatinki; then he moved to Yasnaia Poliana. While he was still at Teliatinki, he was unexpectedly arrested and sent to the rural police headquarters. There were rumors that information had been sent to the police about gatherings in his rooms at which the Tsar was abusively mentioned. Search revealed copies of father's article "The One Thing Needed," in which Gusev had inserted the passages which the censor had excluded from print. Most of these were unfavorable references to the Tsar. Father went twice to see Gusev while he was under arrest—once at the police post and another time at the town of Krapivna, thirty versts from us. At the police post, he was told that Gusev had been arrested for not having any identification document that would entitle him to live in that particular locality. Father wrote, on the spot, a certificate of identification for him. When he came to the line where he was to sign it, he stopped for a moment. "Well, I think we may slip in a 'Count' for this occasion," he said, and signed the paper "Count Tolstoy." He wrote to the Prime Minister, Stolypin, requesting that he be imprisoned in Gusev's place. But by good fortune, this first arrest had no serious consequences; Gusev was soon released and came to live at our house.

Although father could not possibly reply to all his letters, he hated to leave unanswered the questions that people addressed to him in earnest. Before Gusev became his secretary, we had usually settled this problem by sending the inquirer one or another of father's arti-

cles which seemed to fit the particular case. But father must have thought this insufficient because he now asked Gusev to reply for him at length to such letters.

I had seldom been able to force myself to do this. "How could I be teaching people," I thought, "when I myself do not know anything yet? And of what importance could my words be to them? If father writes to someone that he must change his life, that he must live in chastity, that is one thing; but if I write it, that is a different thing altogether." Several times, at father's request, I wrote such letters to people, answering questions addressed to him; but these letters looked so false to me that I despised myself for them.

Probably Dushan Petrovich shared my opinions on this matter. He always answered briefly, for instance: "Lev Nikolayevich has asked me to write to you that those who believe in Christ's teaching do not ask anyone how to act but act as the law of God and their conscience bid them." And that was all. His other answers were in the same style. Gusev, however, replied at length, sometimes on four pages and more. Still, it seemed to me that no matter how beautifully Gusev's letter was written, a little booklet with an article of father's and a few words of greeting from him would give much more to a person who wrote him of his toilsome, sometimes painful, spiritual experiences, of his doubts and sins.

Gusev also received some of the visitors and talked with them as "Tolstoy's follower." And he kept a chronicle of all that went on in the house, not only writing down father's words but also noting the intimate details of our life. We were deprived of the common human satisfaction of living unobserved by outsiders, of talking nonsense, joking, singing, being ourselves, since we knew that our every word and act was immediately fixed on paper. Dushan Petrovich did not pay much attention to the petty details of our life and wrote down chiefly father's words; but Goldenweiser and Gusev were exceedingly interested in the intimate sides of our life and exerted themselves not to overlook anything that was happening in the house.

I remember one instance. A merry crowd had gathered in the downstairs corner room which I occupied: my brother Andrei, my niece Annochka, and Gusev. We were singing gypsy songs lustily in chorus, paying little attention to the words and delighting in the melody, the guitar accompaniment, and our own voices. We all liked gypsy music. Father once said, when listening to gypsy music sung by the famous Varia Panina, "She sings all kinds of nonsensical words—'moment,' 'bliss,' and what not—and yet it is beautiful!"

In one of the songs a sad, yearning melody alternated with the refrain:

Quick, oh, quickly,
Kiss me!
I'm burning with passion,
Kiss me!

Gusev sat and listened; but suddenly, as if remembering something, jumped up, shook his head judiciously, and left the room.

The next day he approached me with noiseless steps, rubbing his hands and smiling ingratiatingly, and asked in an unctuous tone, "Alexandra Lvovna, will you be so good as to tell me the words of that song you sang last night in your room?"

I had forgotten all about the singing last night, was busy typing, and not in the mood to be interrupted.

"I don't remember, Nikolai Nikolayevich—what song?"

"Oh, the one you sang last night with Anna Ilyinshna and Andrei Lvovich. I would like to know the words."

"Oh, that one—well, I'm sure it has some silly kind of words," I tried to get rid of him, continuing to type.

"But if you would just tell me—I'd write them down."

His insistence startled me. "Oh, my gracious, why in the world do you need this silly song?" I asked, interrupting my work. "What for?"

"You see," he explained softly, fidgeting under my inquiry, "it's so characteristic—"

"What is characteristic?"

"Characteristic of the surroundings in which Tolstoy lives—such songs."

Gusev and I got along well. I helped him and, when time allowed, he dictated the manuscripts to me, which greatly facilitated my work. The knowledge that I could not have accomplished all the work that he was doing for father partially reconciled me to the constant presence of a stranger. Apart from his direct secretarial duties, the assistance of Nikolai Nikolayevich was especially valuable in compiling the *Cycle of Reading*, in finding and classifying the thoughts by topics and distributing them into weekly portions for reading.

Gusev stayed with us about two years. In August, 1909, he was again arrested and sentenced to exile, charged with "propagating revolutionary ideas." The Government continued to fight my father, not by interfering with him personally, but by persecuting his friends. It

would have been impossible to invent a worse punishment for him. The whole household gathered in the vestibule to bid Gusev farewell. All were united in a feeling of indignation, revolt, pity. There were tears in father's eyes. Five days later, our local police sergeant brought Gusev back to get his things. As I helped him pack, I thought of the long journey, the loneliness, and exile before him. It seemed to me that only a good book could comfort him, if ever so little. I remembered that Gusev had never read *War and Peace*, obstinately refusing to do it, in spite of my insistence. "Tolstoy as artist does not exist for me," he used to say. "Tolstoy himself now repudiates the works of his former years." At this moment, however, Gusev, touched by our kind farewell, consented and took along three volumes of *War and Peace*. In his letters he later confessed that it was a great comfort to him in exile. The sergeant placed him in the *droshki*, and they left for the Tula prison from which he went on to Cherdyn, a God-forsaken village, four hundred versts from the nearest railway. In his diary the next day father wrote: "Last night the brigands came for Gusev and took him away. The farewell was very good: everybody's attitude to him and his to us. It was very good. I have written a statement about this matter today." In his statement, father again asked the Government that persecutions for his books be directed not against his friends but against himself:

I again wish to ask those who object to the spreading of my thoughts and to my activity, if they cannot keep their peace about it and wish at any price to use violence against anyone, that they use it against me, and in no case against my friends, as I am the only one guilty of originating and the chief culprit in spreading these thoughts that displease them.

In one of the songs a sad, yearning melody alternated with the refrain:

Quick, oh, quickly,
Kiss me!
I'm burning with passion,
Kiss me!

Gusev sat and listened; but suddenly, as if remembering something, jumped up, shook his head judiciously, and left the room.

The next day he approached me with noiseless steps, rubbing his hands and smiling ingratiatingly, and asked in an unctuous tone, "Alexandra Lvovna, will you be so good as to tell me the words of that song you sang last night in your room?"

I had forgotten all about the singing last night, was busy typing, and not in the mood to be interrupted.

"I don't remember, Nikolai Nikolayevich—what song?"

"Oh, the one you sang last night with Anna Ilyinshna and Andrei Lvovich. I would like to know the words."

"Oh, that one—well, I'm sure it has some silly kind of words," I tried to get rid of him, continuing to type.

"But if you would just tell me—I'd write them down."

His insistence startled me. "Oh, my gracious, why in the world do you need this silly song?" I asked, interrupting my work. "What for?"

"You see," he explained softly, fidgeting under my inquiry, "it's so characteristic—"

"What is characteristic?"

"Characteristic of the surroundings in which Tolstoy lives—such songs."

Gusev and I got along well. I helped him and, when time allowed, he dictated the manuscripts to me, which greatly facilitated my work. The knowledge that I could not have accomplished all the work that he was doing for father partially reconciled me to the constant presence of a stranger. Apart from his direct secretarial duties, the assistance of Nikolai Nikolayevich was especially valuable in compiling the *Cycle of Reading*, in finding and classifying the thoughts by topics and distributing them into weekly portions for reading.

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CHAPTER XVII

VISITORS

LIKE a holiday, like some almost unobtainable luxury, we relished our rare intervals of privacy and quiet at home; of being even for a little while by ourselves. Such happy days fell to our lot mostly in late autumn or in winter, when city folk were busy and when making one's way to Yasnaia Poliana through bottomless mire or snowdrifts was much more difficult than in summer.

This everlasting commotion, this constant and often importunate desire of many to visit Yasnaia Poliana finally resulted in our no longer appreciating people. It is true that some people sincerely straightened up in father's presence, as if he had really called to life their best thoughts and feelings; but others only pretended to share his opinions and tried to seem better than they were. Many believed themselves privileged to intrude upon our intimate life, under the pretext of "collecting materials" for a future history of literature. At first we tried to brush them aside, but this proved impossible; self-styled biographers, chroniclers, persons who sought "to justify Tolstoy" in something, crept in through every crevice. Finally, we lost patience with them, and we ceased to follow that wise French precept, "*Il faut laver son linge sale en famille.*"

There were many unexpected disappointments. Today a man would be an ardent follower of Tolstoy; tomorrow he became his fervent denouncer or joined the "League of Russian People"—a political group of the extreme Right which enjoyed court favor—or he became a convinced member of the Orthodox Church. Or again, a man who entreated father to advise him how to lead a good life turned out to be a spy. Rich and poor, famous and unknown, old and young, revolutionaries and monarchists, believers and atheists, peasants, workers, people of high social position, priests, sectarians, foreigners, reporters sought to see my father in an endless line.

In summer when I got up in the morning, I could see people sitting waiting on the bench under the big elm in front of our house. There were old pilgrim women in bast shoes and with knapsacks, on their way to Kiev to pray in the holy catacombs; peasants from near and far villages, each with his need; the half-wit Parasha, who came "to get a penny"; the crazy peasant covered with rags and lice who called

himself a grand duke; visitors who arrived by the morning train and walked from Kozlovka station. Wealthier or more important persons used to hire horses at Yasenki or at Tula, where the express trains stopped, and drive out.

Upstairs in our drawing-room stood a wooden casket of peasant workmanship, filled with copper five-kopeck pieces. The common beggars, wanderers, or pilgrims always received one of these copper pieces and sometimes tea and sugar. They never bothered us overmuch.

"The Lord save you," they would say.

"Where are you going?"

"To Kiev, to Kiev, my child, to pray to the Lord. I've made a vow." With a quick movement that spoke of long habit, they took their heavy packs on their backs again and trudged on.

A man who wished to marry came to get father's advice. An estate owner had become conscious of the sin of owning land and wanted to know the best way to free himself of it. A student asked for money to finance "expropriations," as holdups to obtain funds for revolutionary purposes were called in radical parlance. A half-deranged woman requested Tolstoy's help in propaganda for Esperanto. A youth tempted away from the straight path begged father to help him right himself. A peasant who had refused to perform military service on account of his religious opinions desired to share his thoughts with Tolstoy. A young man was moved to confess to him a sexual abnormality. Writers sought his approval of their work. Newspaper correspondents waited for an interview and tried to calculate how many lines they could make out of it. Parents asked for advice in educational matters. Curious people wanted merely to see the man whom Turgenev called "the great writer of the Russian land."

One type of visitor recurred often and was a little irritating. As I remember, our conversation about him went more or less like this:

"Lev Nikolayevich, Mr. X wishes to see you," the servant would say, handing my father a visiting card.

Father would scrutinize the card—perhaps trying to guess who the person was, perhaps simply to postpone the unwanted interview.

"Oh, Lord! What does he want of me?" he would say, sighing.

"Shall I say that you are busy—or ill?" I would ask, faintly hoping that it might still be possible to get rid of the newcomer, although deep in our hearts we always knew that we could not refuse to receive him, especially when it was cold and muddy outside.

"Ask him in. What can we do?"

The coachman who had driven the man from Tula would turn his horses and go back upon receiving his three rubles, and Mr. X would share our life until night—and sometimes longer.

My father was not only a cordial host but he always wanted to penetrate the inner essence of every person he met. Trying to draw out his guest, he would talk to him about the religious movement among the people, touching upon the land question, speaking of his own work—the *Cycle of Reading*. The visitor would listen indulgently, bored and waiting for a chance to put in a word about something really worth while—"And what do you think of the Italian opera, Lev Nikolayevich?"

"What? The Italian opera?" father would repeat absent-mindedly; and then he would add with an embarrassed look, "You see, I am not much interested in that."

Having done what courtesy required, father would go back to his study. But the guest remained to be entertained. Mother would try, perhaps, to find out whether they had common acquaintances in Petrograd or would talk about Nikisch's concerts; and it would be difficult to discover why the man had come. Had he dropped in for curiosity's sake on his way from Orel to Petrograd, or had he really hoped to interest father in Italian opera?

The next morning, the guest would say, with a cordial smile, "You have so charmed me with your reception—I like it so much here—will you allow me to stay another day?" We would smile sourly. The guest would stay. By now he would be bolder in expounding his ideas, argue with father without embarrassment and, in the evening, play duets on the piano with mother. When at last he had left, father would sigh with relief and say: "It is not good to judge people, but, Lord, what a limited mind, what self-assurance! Truly, that was a large denominator with a small numerator!" Then he would raise his arm over his head and shout merrily, "And now—the Numidian Cavalry!" and he would gallop around the table, the rest of us following him with shrieks of laughter.

But in another two months, the new acquaintance would come back, this time making a special trip from Petrograd to Yasnaia Poliana.

Coming home once, I found in our drawing-room a woman and with her a man who looked like either a negro or a gypsy—swarthy, with curly black hair. No one knew them, and as all of us, but especially father, felt chronically tired of having visitors, it was decided to

get rid of them. But the swarthy man was insistent. He said he was a violinist and his wife a pianist, and that they were determined to play for Lev Nikolayevich. He turned out to be the violinist Mikhail Gavrilovich Erdenko. That night, when he played with a temperament that knew no bounds, firing himself and everyone around him by his music, and father laughed and cried at once, listening to him, we were ashamed to think of how we had tried to send off these lovable people.

Not a day passed without a visitor. I remember how I was called once to the vestibule. A very thin, blond young lady sat on the yellow wooden divan, hatless and disheveled. She was talking rapidly and with irritation. Julia Ivanovna and Ilya Vasilievich were standing helplessly before her.

"Yes, yes—you're hateful people—perhaps you are afraid to let me in? And what I'll tell him—if you only knew!"

She pressed her lips together, and a sly, uncanny smile played on her face. Suddenly, her eyes stared and she burst into insane laughter which ceased abruptly.

"Ah! One more! Can *you* let me see Tolstoy?" she turned to me.

"Lev Nikolayevich cannot be seen," I said. "He is not feeling well and he is working."

She sniffed contemptuously. "You too—But then, I knew it would be so. Only you'll see, you'll see," she suddenly shrieked, "I am going to speak to him just the same! Do you hear? I shall see him, I shall!"

Her excitement increased. Doctor Nikitin came and spoke with her calmly. As for me, I decided that she wanted to kill father. All day long I worried, following the mad woman's every step, watching her every motion, as she roamed our park and walked by the pond under the big pines, waiting for father—and I walked after her. During the day, father spoke to her, and nothing dreadful happened; and in the evening she left, and we never found out who she was or whence she had come.

Father amused himself one day by calculating the average amount of money that he was asked for: it was about 2,000 rubles a day. The only means at his personal disposal were some 1,500 to 2,000 rubles a year—royalties from productions of his plays. At first, he had intended to refuse this income, but when he was told that in that event it would be turned over for the improvement of the imperial ballet, he began to take it and use it for benevolent purposes. Out of it, he helped

peasants ruined by fire, and wanderers, but chiefly men who refused to enter military service.

Those who asked for money, especially peasants, were unable to understand how it could be that father had so little of his own; they could not believe that the estate, the money, the royalties from the writings, all were the property of the family. As in peasant households all was under the firm control of the male head, and the same thing had been true of the landlords' estates ever since they could remember, this was natural enough. "Say what you will," the peasants reasoned, "the Count is the head of everything!" and they came straight to him with their requests. In the morning, when father went out for his walk before starting work, he was besieged by several of them.

"What do you wish?" he asked them.

"It's to Your Excellency I've come," a peasant would reply, taking off his cap and bowing low.

"Well, then, tell me what you want—and put on your cap! Put it on!"

"Don't you let this bother you, Excellency, I've come to Your Excellency—"

"Call me Lev Nikolayevich."

"Yes. You see, I have finished building my new hut. Now if I could get a couple of cartloads of boughs to cover the roof frame—"

The cloud on Lev Nikolayevich's face grew darker. "You know very well, Vlas," he would say, "that the forest no longer belongs to me, that I have no boughs to give you. Why have you come to me?"

"Quite so, Excellency! Of course, I know, Excellency," Vlas would say soothingly. "It's winter already. The hut stands open to the sky, and there's no place I can take those boughs from. Don't leave me without your kindness, Excellency! Tell them to let me have a couple of cartloads—"

"I cannot—I cannot," father answered, and turned away, to find a woman facing him, quietly awaiting her turn to tell him that her cow had died and to ask him to give her money to buy another. All the while the first peasant kept on pleading.

"Dear provider!" the woman suddenly wailed at the top of her voice, "Our dear provider!" and she fell to her knees, covering her face with her hands.

"Stand up, stand up right away," father exclaimed.

When anyone knelt like that before him and would not get up, father, to make the peasant see his point, would also kneel, saying, "Shame! We may kneel only before God!"

"Ekhe—ekhe—" came the exaggerated cough of Faddei, a steady caller, a peasant from the neighboring village who had syphilis complicated by tuberculosis. He never worked—whether from ill health or from laziness, it was hard to tell. His exterior, clothing, and speech were those of a factory worker rather than a peasant; he had a sallow face, worn and vicious. He scanned his words slowly as though ascribing especial importance to every one of them—giving them a tone that was like a threat or a censure. He never took off his cap.

"—At least something to buy bread with—nothing to eat—"

Father took out a fifty-kopeck piece from his leather purse and put it into Faddei's dirty, emaciated palm.

"Why not five kopecks?—I'll choke on it—on your half ruble—dying, that's what I am—nothing to fill my belly with—" Sometimes he threw the half ruble to the ground, and after everybody was gone, picked it up and took it along.

"Lev Mikolaich," a little, wrinkled old woman rolled softly up to him with mincing steps. "Lev Mikolaich, the hut's broken down, there's no bread, and my son is sick—" This woman was seen visiting us for decades. I never remembered her looking any younger; she was always toothless, wrinkled, and coughing. Her hut always broke down, her cow died, her field would not bear.

As likely as not, after father had managed to tear himself loose from his numerous and insistent callers, and was returning from a walk with thoughts and images in his head ready to be put on paper, the peasant asking for boughs would step into his path again.

"So then, Your Excellency, what do you say—have the kindness—"

"Ekhe—ekhe—" Faddei coughed, spurting saliva all around him. He had evidently decided to stand pat until evening and to conquer Lev Nikolayevich, if not through pity then through exhaustion. "Well, what of that—too stingy with your money?—from such riches—just half a ruble—"

In the evening, or sometimes late in the night, village fires started. This often happened after a holiday, especially the "altar holiday"—the day of the saint in whose name the village church was consecrated—because on that day the peasants drank especially hard. If the fiery reflection on the sky was far away, we observed it from our balcony, exchanging threadbare phrases: "It's burning brightly! It must be the grain store—no, it's the huts. If there were only a fire engine! A terrible thing, a village fire!" But if the fire was close to Yasnaia Poliana, the water barrels and pumps of the estate usually came out, with our workers and the steward at the head, and we all ran to lend

a hand. There was not a single fire engine in the whole district; people poured water from pails. The church bell tolled the alarm with loud, hurried strokes. The village was filled with shouting, women's wailing, children's crying, the lowing of cattle. And the next morning, peasants came to the estate, one after the other, with gloomy, soot-smeared faces, and stood around the house steps silently, hanging their heads. One had lost his entire household, the other's cattle had burned, another had lost his shed with the feed and the unthreshed grain. Father distributed his "theater money" as we called it: ten rubles to one, fifteen to another, or even twenty-five rubles to build a hut.

Apart from those who personally besieged Lev Nikolayevich for money were others who wrote in menacing or self-humiliating tones, asking for a ruble or for hundreds or thousands of rubles.

Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy,

YASNAIA POLIANA, KOZLOVKA,
November 16, 1906

DEAR SIR:

Need fifty rubles. Send it. Hope you will not compel writing another time. Address I.S.5, general delivery. Since the post office accepts no money for general delivery, you may send by simple letter, or by registered. Have no money for a stamp.¹

But here is a sample letter of a different kind from a girl in the preparatory grade of a secondary school:

Lev Nikolayevich, Count Tolstoy.

VILLAGE OF YASNAIA POLIANA,
TULA PROVINCE

DEAR LEV NIKOLAYEVICH,

Please send my sister Katia a little money. She studied at the university in Moscow, and then they put her in prison. Afterwards, they let her out and she came home, but mama and papa did not let her come into the rooms, because they said they had cursed her and that she should never come back.² Katia went away, but then she fell ill and is now in the public hospital. She will soon be discharged from there but she has nothing, not even a warm coat, and there will be snow soon. She has no friends here because we lived at Ekaterinoslav before, and have been in Poltava only a little while. And I am afraid that Katia will die of hunger because she is proud. Today, I had the idea of writing to you, because mama, before Katia went to prison, always argued with her about you, and now mama

1. Original in the Archives of the Tolstoy Museum.

2. No doubt the young student had committed something qualified as a political offense.

is saying that it's all your fault, but this is not true. Katia loved you, that means you are good. And when Katia went away to Moscow she gave me your photograph, and I always carry it with me to the Gymnasium and always get 5 [the highest mark]; only once did I get 2, but that was unjust, I knew the lesson. So please send a little money. If you do not have it, please get it from somewhere. I shall pay you back when I become a physician. So please send it by December 10, because Katia does not even have anything at all. Later she will go to Ekaterinoslav and will give lessons, and I shall not tell her that you sent it. So please send it, because she will leave the hospital on December 12. Goodbye. Send me an answer.

Your loving
ANIA RUDENKO

P.S. I am a pupil in the preparatory class.

"But I can't let you in, I can't," Ilya Vasilievich is saying, trying to bar the way with his scrawny body to two young ladies attempting to penetrate into our anteroom. "Lev Nikolayevich has left for his walk and as soon as he comes back he will sit down to work."

At this moment father's figure appears at the end of the garden path. He walks with a sprightly step, wearing a white blouse, slightly supporting himself on a cane, his hat in his hand.

At the sight of him, the young girls quickly exchange glances, skip up to him and stand still as though petrified.

"Have you come to see me?" father asks them.

"Yes—no—we really—"

"Ah!" Father hunches his shoulders, as he always does when displeased with something, and walks quickly by. The girls are in rapture, they have seen Tolstoy!

Students, teachers, physicians, singly and in groups, arrived to look at Tolstoy. Once a man brought his daughter who had just graduated from the gymnasium as a gold-medal student. For a reward, her father had offered her her choice of a bicycle, a gold watch, or a trip to see Tolstoy. The young lady chose the trip. It would never be too late for the bicycle and the watch, but Tolstoy was old, he would die before long—and so they came.

Entire schools appeared. "Look, children," the teacher would say, "this is that same grandfather Tolstoy who wrote *The Prisoner of Caucasus* and *Childhood and Adolescence*." The children would dutifully fix their eyes on father, not knowing what to do or say, awkward with embarrassment, and stuffing their fingers into their mouths.

One after the other, father's old friends, for whom he had a deep attachment, died: his life-long friend Dmitri Alexeyevich Diakov, "Grandpa" Gay, the philosopher and critic Nikolai Nikolayevich Strakhov, and Prince Leonid Dmitrievich Urusov, Vice-Governor of Tula. Nothing connected father with the writers who were his contemporaries: Vladimir Soloviov, Chicherin, Boborykin. His relations with them were pleasant, but they seldom came, and only while we still spent the winters in Moscow.

There were still a few families, however, with whom we were bound by many years' friendship—a friendship that grew not so much out of a community of interests and opinions as from mutual sympathy. We were especially intimate with the Stakhovich family and with the Olsufievs. They had a sincere affection for father but did not in the least share his convictions, waving them aside as a tedious and superfluous appendage to their friendship with him.

I remember the sight of a magnificent sleigh and troika driving up smartly to our front steps. The servants downstairs were instantly set in commotion. "Who's come? Who's there?" mother asks with a pre-occupied air. "Ah, it's Stakhovich! Mikhail Alexandrovich! Misha! I'm so glad!" And Stakhovich, alertly skipping over every other step while he wiped and smoothed his frost-covered beard with a snow-white linen handkerchief, entered the house like a member of the family; the mixed aroma of good tobacco, general freshness, and very fine perfume spread around him. Covering all voices with his soft, beautiful baritone, he kissed mother's hands, respectfully bowed to father, familiarly and a trifle indulgently shook hands with Julia Ivanovna.

No sooner did he enter the room than he monopolized everybody's attention. He filled all vacancies, made everyone smile, enlivened the most tedious topics with his wit and jokes. All were glad to see him. He told news of politics and state to father; and father, taking advantage of Stakhovich's influential connections at Petrograd, asked him to exert himself on behalf of some young man who had refused military service, or a follower of his imprisoned for distributing his prohibited works. Mother liked him, too, in his absence called him simply Misha Stakhovich, and for a long time had secretly hoped to marry my sister Tania to him. I liked him for his cheerfulness and wit; and, as a growing girl, I thought more than once, while busily unpacking the candy boxes or taking the magnificent "Beurré Alexandre" pears from tissue paper wrappers: "What a darling! If I were in Tania's place I certainly would marry him!" And the servants liked

him because he gave tips with a lavish hand, not infrequently in gold pieces. Such was this man who bowed low, with boundless admiration, before Tolstoy the artist, and who at the same time passed in cold silence Tolstoy the thinker.

His sister Sofia Alexandrovna was no less charming and brilliant. I loved her from my early childhood with that feeling which only a little girl who has never been pampered and is not pretty can have for one whom she believes incomparably superior. The things which attracted me in Sofia Alexandrovna were those which I did not possess myself—graceful refinement and beauty. I listened in raptures to her manner of speech—she was unable to pronounce “r” and “l” clearly, and this seemed most charming; I was breathless with admiration when she argued with my father, sometimes almost insolently persuading him that he was wrong. This happened especially often when he spoke slightly of poetry, saying that the only reason for poets speaking in verse was that they had nothing to say in prose.

“Ah, what are you saying, Lev Nikolayevich!” she exclaimed beside herself with indignation, her “r’s” and “l’s” gracefully wrong. “And Tiutchev? And Pushkin? Now listen—listen! ‘When to mortal ears the noisy day subsides—’”

Father instantly continued: “‘And on the hushed urban spaces—’”

“‘Descends the half-translucent nightly shade—’” Sofia Alexandrovna went on; and when she finished—knowing that father liked this particular poem of Pushkin, which, in addition, she recited beautifully—she asked: “And will you dare to say that this is poor?”

“No, it’s wonderful, wonderful,” father agreed.

Sofia Alexandrovna recited one poem after another, changed from Pushkin to Tiutchev, whom father liked so much. All this delighted me, for I so often felt tired of visitors who adoringly hung on father’s lips as though they expected him any minute to say something which would at once make them very wise.

Often when father found it too tiring and difficult to stay in Moscow, he went to stay at the Olsufievs’ estate in the vicinity of Moscow, often taking sister Tania, and sometimes staying there for a long time. Father was fond of thinking up extraordinary diversions; I am sure that he was responsible for the idea of going to the public baths with old Count Adam Vasilievich Olsufiev. Father, mother, the little, lively, bald-headed Adam Vasilievich, and I would drive in our closed coach to the Central Baths. Father and Adam Vasilievich went into the men’s common half, while mother and I bought thirty-kopeck

tickets—for the fifty-kopeck department was considered too expensive. As father stepped out of the coach, mother called after him to be careful not to forget anything and not to catch cold.

Although mother and I took a long time washing our hair, weighing ourselves for five kopecks, and drinking cranberry *kvass*, as often as not we were out before the old gentlemen and had to wait for them in the coach. At last they appeared, with faces shining and red from steam, talking animatedly. While still in the bathhouse they had started on a debate and had forgotten about us.

Nikolai Nikolayevich Gay, one of father's close friends, was an outstanding Russian painter, whose works were a peculiar and unusual interpretation of Gospel themes. When I think of Grandpa Gay I always want to say, "Dear grandpa!" he was so much our own, so close to us. Everyone in the house rejoiced when he came. He was affectionate and gentle; no one felt embarrassed in his presence. Grandpa had a round, pink, bald head, framed in a few tufts of soft white hair, and was very pink and cleanly. He loved to joke and was always the first to laugh, with a silent laugh that shook his whole body. All the rest of the company laughed, too—not so much at the joke as caught by grandpa's merriment. Grandpa loved sweets, and usually after lunch he asked mother, just as we children did: "Little mama, haven't you something that tastes nice?"

I remember grandpa's picture "Crucifixion," which stood in the room where Tania studied painting. Father used to stand for a long time before the picture; and he showed it to everybody, emitting loud "Ahs!" to express his admiration. But I could not understand what he liked about it. Christ was pictured as a plain man with a suffering expression, while the distorted face of the robber simply horrified me. Misha could imitate him excellently.

"Come on, Misha," Tania used to say, "show us the robber!"

And Misha stretched out and became rigid as though nailed to the cross, with staring eyes and open mouth.

I remember how grandpa, disheveled, soiled with clay, was passionately absorbed in modeling father's bust. This was, in general, a period when all of us at Yasnaia Poliana were carried away with sculpture and painting. It was about the same time that Repin and Ginsburg visited at Yasnaia Poliana and also made father's bust. From "Pesochnaya," in our vicinity, loads of clay were hauled, of different kinds—gray, yellow, blue; and we children rapturously busied our-

selves with it. It was soft and pleasant to the touch, and it was fun to see little mushrooms or bowls come out of it.

One day grandpa, with a frowning and worried face, ran up to the dining-room looking for father, and they went away together. We learned later that an old woman from the village had been driving a cart with brushwood. On a slanting road near the Cherta the cart fell on her and we did not know if she were living or dead. The peasants did not dare to lift the cart before the police arrived! Father and grandpa ordered the cart lifted, but the old woman was already dead. It made a very strong impression on me. For a long time, I was afraid of passing that slant on the road.

Repin's image stands out in my memory as though he were still before me—with his attentive, slightly squinting eyes, one of which squinted a little more than the other, giving his face a sly look not at all in keeping with his character. He would look and look at father long and steadily, as if feeling him with his eyes, then quickly sketch a few strokes with his pencil, and gaze at him again.

"He took my boots off me—a good thing he left me my trousers!" father said in comic indignation, commenting on Repin's portrait of him. "No, really, it is so pretentious, so unnatural—doesn't he know I never walk barefoot? Once in my life, I did take my boots off—and wasn't it my bad luck that Repin should have seen me right then?" Father decidedly disliked that portrait, and when people sent him postcard reproductions, asking for his autograph, he always refused. He was right when he called it pretentious. Repin often painted him with a kind of sentimental pathos, creating in his imagination images of Tolstoy the tiller of the soil, Tolstoy praying, Tolstoy in a nimbus of sunshine.

At the same time he had a deep attachment for father. Silently, never parting with his pencil, Repin listened to father with an absorbed air, without interrupting or arguing, and sometimes smiling as if to himself. He spoke little and did not announce his opinions. It was only from his second wife, Mme Nordman, that we learned that he had been a vegetarian for a long time. When father wrote "I Cannot Be Silent," Repin responded immediately by publishing a letter against capital punishment in the newspaper *Slovo* of July 10, 1908. It read:

In his article on capital punishment Lev Tolstoy voiced the things which have been boiling in the hearts of all Russians, but of which we did not

speak, either from pusillanimity or else from not knowing how to say them. Lev Tolstoy is right: better the noose or the prison than continuing every day in silence to read of the horrible executions which disgrace our country, and by this silence to approve of them.

Millions, tens of millions of people will undoubtedly put their signatures under the letter of our great genius and every one of these signatures is like the moan of a tormented heart. I beg the editors to add my signature to that list. I. Repin.³

From early years on, I remember still another of our steady visitors, a big, loud-voiced old man of whom I was a little bit afraid. "The great Leo!" he shouted at the top of his lungs. "The mighty, the strong! Who else could ever create *War and Peace*? Who gave us such immortal, eternal images?" Father, who usually disliked and was irritated by this sort of talk, only laughed when he heard it from Stasov. But I felt frightened; it seemed to me that this man who shouted so loudly and gesticulated so energetically was a trifle mad. And suddenly, to my horror, he fixed his gaze on me and bellowed, "Look! This maiden has a cow's eyes!"

"Oh, Lord, why does he treat me this way?" I thought, reddening like a boiled lobster.

"Hera, the bovine-eyed Hera!" he shouted. But I was poor in Greek mythology, did not understand this compliment, and felt still more confused. In a few years, however, I became used to him, and he seemed to me a charming and kind old man. Vladimir Vasilievich Stasov was director of the Imperial Public Library of Petrograd and supplied father with the books and materials he desired.

He never came to us alone but was always accompanied by the sculptor Ilya Yakovlevich Ginsburg. I could not imagine them separately, although it would have been difficult to find two men more unlike each other. Stasov was huge, with a big, gray mane and very large and regular features. Ginsburg was exceptionally small, with a tiny black beard, lively, and perpetually moving. I had the impression that Ginsburg always wanted to walk on tiptoe because otherwise he could not reach up to anything. Stasov had a rough, loud voice, and Ginsburg, a soft, high one like a woman's. Ginsburg many times made father's statues and busts; his work was good and perfectly correct, except for one thing: there was no likeness. When it so happened that Ginsburg came to Yasnaia Poliana alone, we always felt like asking him what he had done with Vladimir Vasilievich. Both

3. N. N. Gusev, *Dva Goda s Tolstym* (*Two Years with Tolstoy*).



Tolstoy posing for Prince Paolo Trubetskoy



Tolstoy and Repin

of them looked at father with adoration, but while Stasov always expressed his feelings noisily and tempestuously, Ginsburg remained silent.

If someone at table unknowingly offered meat to Paolo Trubetskoy, one of the most brilliant sculptors of our time, his big, long face wrinkled up and assumed an insulted and squeamish expression: "*Je ne mange pas de cadavres!*" he growled. He told us how he once chanced into a slaughter house and what a fearful impression it made on him. Since then he had been unable to eat any meat.

I visited, with brother Liova, his studio at No. 1, Nevsky Prospect, at the time when he was modeling the equestrian statue of Alexander III.⁴ In the middle of the room stood a huge live horse; and to my horror, other beasts emerged from all sides: a bear, a fox, and a wolf, which had become vegetarian during his stay with Trubetskoy. "Several wolves have died," my brother explained to me, "but this one seems all right—got used to it."

Father liked this Russian prince whose title was so little becoming to him. He had grown up in Italy, could hardly speak Russian, yet was Russian in appearance; cheerful, kind, childlike, and strong with his great talent. Although Trubetskoy did not ask father to pose for him, reluctant to take his time, father gladly did so. In his shirt sleeves, perspiring and breathing noisily, Trubetskoy worked the clay with his huge hands, using no instruments, forgetting everything around him, scarcely answering father's questions. And father, as if spellbound by the influence of the great artist, sat motionless and calm on his pedestal, watching Trubetskoy's hands gradually forge a bust very like him and majestic.

"Why did you never come before, Vladimir Galaktionovich?" I asked Korolenko, the writer, when he first came to see father. He smiled tenderly, with embarrassment, as if he now understood that he had made a mistake. "You see, there are so many people coming to your father—and, to tell the truth, I didn't have the courage. I always heard that Lev Nikolayevich tolerates no contradictions. I was afraid." We were silent for a while. I was taking him to the Chertkovs in our buggy. Suddenly Vladimir Galaktionovich turned toward me, looked me in the eyes, and smiled. "But now I see how tolerant he is—I didn't think it would be *this way!*"

Korolenko had come the day before, and all day long father and

4. The one which stood at the entrance of the Nikolayevsky Terminal at Petrograd.

he conversed uninterruptedly. Vladimir Galaktionovich told father much that was interesting from his travels in Russia, about the *sectarians*,⁵ about Sarov, where the body of a newly canonized saint was found; of the Votiak tribe,⁶ of the tortures of which he had been witness; of America and in particular of Henry George, the American political economist who favored the single tax.

Concerning Henry George, Korolenko told a story which somewhat troubled father. During a convention at which Korolenko had been present, someone asked Henry George whether he thought it permissible to let Chinese laborers come to America and give them work on an equal basis with Americans. George, who obviously resented this question, replied that, although they might be given work, it would be necessary to regulate the wage rates of the Chinese workers.

Several of his disciples jumped up, exclaiming: "We don't agree with you!" "Smart fellows!" exclaimed father, interrupting Korolenko. "Certainly not. Every workman must be free to work where and as he wants to. I did not expect that from George. . . . Well, and what answer did he give?"

"I don't remember," said Korolenko, "only his answer was poor. But that was already at the end of the movement. And yet there was a time when nearly all the country was carried away by his ideas."

The conversation was lively and generally cheerful in tone. Father was carried away with enthusiasm and spoke of his plans of future work.

"When I grow up," he concluded, laughing, "I shall describe many different types—it is very difficult—" And then he interrupted himself

5. General name applied in Russia to those who openly broke with the Russian Orthodox Church, which was the religion of the State, and followed various other Christian cults mostly originated by themselves. Most of these *sectarians* were peasants. They frequently suffered very severe persecutions.

6. The Votiaks are a tribe of Finnish extraction numbering about half a million people and living in northeastern European Russia, in what is now the Autonomous Votiak Area. Although most of them were supposed to have adopted Christianity centuries ago, there were still no less than ten thousand heathen among them in the 1890's and rumors were current that they secretly practiced human sacrifice. In 1892, the trial of some Votiak natives of the village of Multan for murder with ritualistic motives attracted much publicity. Some of the liberal leaders in Russia suspected the Government of inventing the whole affair in order to create a precedent that could afterward be used against the Jews. Prominent men were asked to participate in the defense, among others the writer Korolenko, who told Tolstoy about the trial. In spite of the efforts of the defense, the court twice passed the verdict of guilty, but the Senate (Russia's supreme court) in both cases reversed the sentence. The third trial resulted in acquittal (1896).

as if reminded of something and added sadly: "But I really should say, like the old man in the story who was asked to go bathing, 'Thanks, I've bathed enough in my life already.'"

When, as was our custom, I went to see father before retiring, he told me that his talk with Korolenko did not satisfy him, that he would like to speak with him in private. Early in the morning, he invited Vladimir Galaktionovich to come with him on his walk, which as a rule he never did, preferring always to go alone. Father told me afterward that, during the walk, he spoke to Korolenko of the grief of his life. Korolenko was moved and overwhelmed. For a long time, he could not regain his composure and kept saying:

"And I imagined that Sofia Andreyevna was the guardian angel of Lev Nikolayevich; that he lived in such happy surroundings, that those around him feared to disturb his peace with the least contradiction! Yes, he must be as strong as an oak tree that withstands the greatest storms without breaking!"

The men did not want to part. When finally the horses were harnessed for Korolenko, father walked ahead so that Korolenko might pick him up on the way and be with him a while longer. As the coach was leaving our courtyard I asked myself with amazement: "Is it possible that we have known him only since yesterday?"

Mechnikov was one of the most eminent of Russian scientists. Father had been slightly prejudiced against him but after reading his *Studies on the Nature of Man* partially freed himself of that feeling. He liked the book, spoke of it, and quoted some passages, Mechnikov came to visit him. Their conversations were brilliant. Newspaper correspondents who had invaded our house virtually by violence feverishly jotted them down until we finally succeeded in putting them out. Mechnikov was an excellent talker. He spoke of the achievements of science; father listened attentively. From science the conversation shifted to literature, art. Mechnikov was versatile, interesting, vivid. When Goldenweiser played the piano he listened with delight, and we discovered that he had a fine understanding and knowledge of music. But although Mechnikov was fascinating and interesting, to father all this was "not it." He looked attentively at Mechnikov and sought for a chance to be alone with him.

The next day, he invited Mechnikov to go with him to the Chertkovs. In order to be alone with the famous scientist, father drove a buggy himself, something he despised, as the only modes of locomotion he liked were walking and riding horseback. Later he told us,

"Every time I attempted to touch upon religious-philosophic questions, I struck a wall. These things do not interest him in the least, he is full of his science only."

Mechnikov had come with his attractive wife. She evidently shared all his convictions and looked at him with admiration. We were startled to see that Mechnikov not only refused to drink water before it was boiled, but asked for boiled water even for washing, fearing infection. He was shocked when I offered him radishes at dinner, and warmly urged us to drink no unboiled water and eat no uncooked vegetables, as they were all infected.

"Yes," father said pensively, "here you are taking all these precautions—do you believe you can prolong life in that way?"

"Undoubtedly so. In the first place you avoid infection; in the second place . . ." and Mechnikov cited examples of people who lived uncautiously and unwisely and did not spare their health.

"Well, God grant that you live to be a hundred!" father said, smiling.

"Perhaps even longer," the scientist replied with conviction.

Upon Mechnikov's departure father said, "No, the scientists have no time for such trifles as religious questions. To think of the amount of work they have to do! The other day, I saw in an encyclopedia that there exist seven thousand kinds of flies alone—and they all have to be studied!"

When I was a growing girl, I thought that all those whom people called "learned" must be like Lombroso, the small, lean, old man, helpless and pitiful, who knew nothing about the most essential things, and could not even tell one crop from another in the field. This must have been the crude reflection, in my childish intellect, of father's attitude toward scientists. As to Lombroso in particular, he seemed to me so ungenuine, almost silly, that I pitied him; but when father returned from an outing with Lombroso and told us what had happened, I conceived a positive antipathy for the man.

Father had invited the scholar for a swim. The Voronka is a narrow and unimportant little river, but we had had it dammed, and where the bathhouse stood it was deep. Father, as usual, swam out of the bathhouse enclosure into the open and Lombroso followed him. Suddenly father heard strange gulping sounds, looked back and saw the scholar sinking. He hurried to his rescue.

"I barely managed to keep him from pulling me down, too," father



Nikolai Nikolayevich Gay



Mechnikov and Tolstoy

told us laughing, "and I don't understand how he could venture out of the bathhouse if he knew he couldn't swim."

Simultaneously with Lombroso, Vasili Alexeyevich Maklakov visited us. If I remember correctly, Maklakov was put up in the same room as Lombroso. It was a room divided by a semipartition. The scholar declared that some money had disappeared from his personal effects. We were disturbed when he first told us; but what was not our indignation when he accused Maklakov of having stolen it!

Lombroso himself was apparently not much gratified by his interview with Tolstoy. When, many years afterward, I read his description of that visit to Yasnaia Poliana, I had to ask myself whether it was possible that Lombroso had not bothered to acquaint himself with Tolstoy's opinions before going to see him. Lombroso wrote with a sort of amazement of the way Tolstoy received his opinions:

I found that it was positively impossible to speak on certain subjects without irritating him; and especially of the questions toward which my heart was most inclined. For instance, he could not be persuaded that my theory of "born criminals" was correct, a theory which he denies although he has seen these types just as I have and has described them. Indeed, on this subject a wall stood between us, which made it impossible for us to understand each other. This wall was his amazing assertion that neither my own nor any other theory of criminal law could explain to him the foundation on which human societies base their right to punish criminals.

A few months afterward I read his *Resurrection* and saw in it a clear proof of the fact that I had wasted my breath talking to him.⁷

Two Japanese, the editor of the *Kokumin Shimbun*, Tokutomi, and a collaborator of his, Fukai, once came to Yasnaia Poliana.

"Real ones?" we asked each other as we waited for them.

"Yes, real, as real as can be, only dressed our way."

Time has deleted from my memory most things about their visit, but I shall never forget one scene. Father, mother, my sisters, and brother Liova, with his wife Dora, entertained the guests in the drawing-room. The conversation was about Japanese art and father was praising Japanese painting.

"And yet I know nothing of Japanese music—the folk music," he said. "Do you know some of your folk songs?" he asked the guests.

"Yes, we do."

Then we all pressed the Japanese gentlemen with requests to sing us a folk song. They took seats next to each other, half closed their

7. N. N. Apostolov, *Zhivoi Tolstoy* (*The Living Tolstoy*).

eyes and began to sing. It was something more than eccentric to our ears, it was incredible! Amazement was on all faces, and all of a sudden irrepressible, tempestuous laughter broke out. We were conscious of the awkwardness of our conduct, of our great impoliteness, and the possibility of giving offense to our highly appreciated guests—and yet we were unable to control ourselves.

"Ha-ha-ha," father roared, holding his sides. "Forgive me, please—this is so strange, so unusual—ha-ha-ha!"

I ran into the next room and there, throwing myself upon a divan, laughed until I ached. Fortunately, our guests did not seem offended in the least; they were better trained than we. When we sang Russian songs, which very likely seemed as funny and surprising to them, they remained earnest and polite.

One day, father received a telegram saying that the well-known American political leader and presidential candidate, Bryan, intended to visit him. He came early one morning in the winter of 1904 and was to leave at noon, since he was to be received in audience by the Emperor at Tsarskoye Selo the next day. But his talks with father so carried him away that he telegraphed to Tsarskoye Selo that he was unable to come.

After lunch, father invited Bryan to take an outing on horseback. We ran out on the porch to look at this unusual sight. Father in a peasant half-length coat and felt boots mounted his beautiful *Délire*. The huge American wore a fur coat of city cut, which looked absurd with a plain leather belt strapped over it, and a warm cap with earlaps. He rode a small light bay mare whose back bent like an arc when he climbed up on her. But both men were very well satisfied and gaily rode down the drive after mother and I had photographed them. Bryan had come with his son, a boy of about sixteen. We ran to the pond to skate, and he showed me how to play hockey.

"Bryan is a broad-minded, sensitive man," father said later. "Strange that he can give his heart to political activity."

In his article "Non-resistance and Harrison," father tells of his conversation with Bryan:

In that same manner of his which showed an obvious intention to point out to me gently and pleasantly wherein I erred, he asked me how I explained my strange doctrine of non-resistance to evil by violence; and like everybody else, used the argument which seems so irrefutable to people, about the bandit murdering or assaulting a child. I told him that I profess non-resistance to evil by violence because, having lived seventy-five

years, I have never met anywhere except in theory this fantastic brigand who would under my eyes murder or outrage a child; but that I have continuously seen, and still see, millions of brigands outraging children, women, and grown men, aged men and women, and all laboring people, in the name of the right they have recognized to use violence over their fellow beings.

When I said this, my charming companion with his characteristic quick understanding did not let me finish, laughed, and agreed that my argument was correct.

When I was still a little girl and liked to run out impetuously upon the porch, I sometimes flew straight into something big, hairy, naked, and bounced off in terror. It was "the Swede." I don't know where he came from. A strict vegetarian and an ascetic, "the Swede" considered himself father's fellow in convictions and was wont to say that every man had the right to a certain piece of the soil and the right to choose his piece of soil wherever he pleased. "I wish to stay here," he would say, marking off with big, soiled feet a small area on the ground. Conventions and common ideas of decency did not exist for him. When he felt hot he lay down on our porch practically naked, throwing some rag over his mighty, hairy body. He slept on the ground, placing an empty bottle under his gray, shaggy head instead of a pillow.

The Swede inspired me with a mystical terror; I imagined him to be something in the order of the house-sprite or the forest goblin of Russian folklore. No sooner did I catch sight of him, draped in rags with flying gray mane, than I would race in the opposite direction. If I remembered him in the evening, when falling asleep in my bed, I felt so frightened that I had to dive under my blankets, head and all.

"He ought to be chased away, this ragamuffin," mother used to say. "Dirty, naked, and here are young ladies, guests—Liouchka always nurses all kinds of vagabonds!"

But mother did not have the heart to chase him away. The Swede's peculiar way of thinking, his straightforwardness, the consistency of his convictions and his contempt for people's opinions appealed to father, and the Swede lived for a long time at Yasnaia Poliana and later at Osviannikovo where Tania, for the sake of mother's peace of mind, sent him.

Once we were having lunch in the croquet yard, and talking animatedly with a visiting Frenchman. The Swede was gloomily silent. From time to time, the well-bred, elegant Frenchman threw wondering glances in the direction of the half-naked, ragged old man. Then

he took out a cigarette case and, after asking the ladies' permission, lighted a cigarette. The Swede started. "Tell him," he said to Tania, pointing his finger at the Frenchman, "that he should not poison the air."

Tania translated his words to the Frenchman.

"Have the kindness to tell him, Mademoiselle," the Frenchman retorted, "that I have asked the ladies' permission and consider that I now have the right to smoke."

"Tell him," the Swede roared angrily, "that if he does not stop polluting the air I shall spit in his face!"

Tania translated this, too. The Frenchman grew purple. It cost us great efforts to calm him.

The sectarians aroused in father a complicated feeling of admiration, tenderness, and perhaps even envy. They were broad and daring, courageous enough to break with the old mainstays of Russian life, serene, sure, without a shade of boasting or cocksureness; narrow, because once assured that their faith was right, they no longer sought for anything new; sober, abstaining from smoking, abstemious in all things and therefore sound and strong physically.

Siutaev was one of the most powerful among peasant sectarians. Often when one of us complained or was angry, father repeated the two principal adages of that wise man: "All is in thyself" and "All is in love." In father's study still hangs a portrait of Siutaev, a copy made by sister Tania from Repin's original. He looked like a simple muzhik, like a multitude of others, with a small, brown beard; only his gray eyes were striking—wise and a trifle too stern.

It was a long time ago, but I still remember what an overwhelming impression Peter Vasilievich Verigin, head of the Dukhobors, made on me when he came to see father after his fifteen years of exile in Siberia. Terrific force and authority emanated from his entire being. Here was a leader, a dictator! And, strange to say, when young, I always associated the image of Verigin with that of Peter the Great.

Other sectarians came: Molokans, Malevantsy, Dobroliubovtsy; and I always had the same feeling of embarrassment and respect before them. "Where is your papa?" they would ask. "We must speak with him." There was so much simplicity in this word "papa," which they used in the customary Russian diminutive form; such assurance that father would at once come out and speak with them, such simple-hearted disregard of the peculiarities of our life, of the necessity for someone to go and tell father that they had come, and of the impos-

sibility of doing so at once because father was working! When finally it was brought home to them that "papa" could not be seen at once they became confused, as if they were guilty of something.

"That's all right, all right, we can wait."

And what wise calm, what unconquerable strength there was in them! The Government frequently persecuted them, and when they went to face suffering and death nobody even knew about it; no newspaper shouted about them to tell the whole world how they were abused and oppressed.

During father's last years one of the Skoptsy,⁸ Andrei Yakovlevich Grigoriev, a big, broad, robust man, came several times to speak to him. The lack of any beard on his face made him look young. Cheerful and witty, with a thoroughly peasant humor, he was a good storyteller. During one of his visits with us, at Kochety, in August, 1910, he told father his life history. I was present and took down his story in shorthand. Father later read and verified my record.

THE STORY OF THE SKOPETS—ANDREI YAKOVLEVICH GRIGORIEV.

"My family are from the town of Prilepy, in the province of Mtsensk. We were Orthodox people. My father liked a good drink, he was thorough at drinking and swearing; as the saying goes, might be better but couldn't be done! He met a certain Semen Timofeyevich Rastorguyev, struck up an agreement with him, and together they bought a tract of timber. Well, this Rastorguyev belonged to the Khlysty.⁹ Father liked their faith. He went with them once and after that stopped smoking or snuffing tobacco; and, since he was head of the household, we others stopped it too.

"The Khlysty drank no wine. And they began to tell us that a man must be born again, that he must change his faith; that there was nothing in the Orthodox Church, that it wasn't any good for a man; that an Orthodox was both a drunken man and a beaten man. Father agreed with them, and they took him into their Khlyst faith. Afterwards, mother and three sisters also went over to them—seven of us altogether."

"And were you grown up then?" father asked Andrei Yakovlevich.

"I was about fourteen. I began to beg them to take me in, too. I said, 'I want to pray to God.' They wouldn't take me in. Later, when

8. This particular sect practiced castration, believing it to be the right path to salvation.

9. A sect whose practices at religious meetings resemble those of the "Holy Rollers" in America but are often more exaggerated.

I was about grown—‘go and get married’—my people told me. All right. I married. A year went by, and again I began to beg them: ‘Take me in, I want to pray to God.’ But father and mother kept doubting. ‘There will be persecutions,’ they said, ‘and he still so young!’ At that time, you know, people were punished fearfully for it. ‘Well, just as you wish,’ I told them. ‘If you don’t take me in, I’ll find a place for myself.’ They held council among themselves. ‘Well, there’s nothing to be done, let’s take him in. Come what may.’ And they took me in. I became un-married again because a married man cannot be in with them and said to my wife: ‘Now we’ll live like brother and sister. Are you willing?’ ‘Willing,’ she said.

“Well, somehow I didn’t like the religion of the Khlysty. Somehow it wasn’t right.”

“Not clean?” asked father.

“No, I didn’t like it. There were girls and women and all together, and all kinds of sweet words. The world looked sad to me, and I went to Zalegoshcha. There I chanced upon the Skoptsy. Well, of course, they began to convert me. And so I left the Khlysty. I took hold strongly of the new faith; I was captured, I might say. And they agreed—and cleansed me.”

“Was it there they did it to you?”

“No! Those were rich people and great cowards. They wouldn’t do it for any price. It’s the bold ones that do it, those that don’t care if they are flogged to death. I had it done in the Ufa province. There were some brave fellows there. ‘So then, are you willing, Andrei Yakovlevich?’ they asked. ‘I am,’ I said. ‘Very well.’ So then they did it.”

The Skopets sat silent and hung his head.

“Were you ill?” father asked him in a low voice.

“I was—all Lent long I was ill.”

“And your father—was he living then?”

“He learned of it and said, ‘Do as you think best, but I cannot—it’s awfully hard.’”

“But he changed his life just the same—stopped drinking?”

“He did—only he was very weak about the female sex. And my brother was also received in the Skoptsy.”

“Did you have fear of being banished or that the household would be ruined?”

“It was ruined anyway: my brother died, I was put in prison, Niki-for began to drink. Mardari, our eldest, stayed alone. And our house-

hold used to be a good one, we lived very well—used to have a brick-yard."

"How many horses?"

"About twelve, and three or four cows, and our own vegetable field. I worked in a factory at that time. One day they came to me and said: 'Run quick, the policeman is waiting for you, your brother is ill, he's about to die.' I threw everything down and ran. I found him still living. Before he died, he said, 'Forgive me and pray for me.' We had not yet buried him when they took my other brother into military service and threw me into prison."

"What for?"

"For being a Skopets. When I went home at Easter time, they soon caught me and put me into prison. Of course, there I sat all winter, and they tried me."

"Where did they put you?"

"In the 'secret.' "¹⁰

"Was it very tedious?"

"Very, for I was young and not developed for spiritual life. I encouraged myself by saying that God suffered too, but all was not yet clear to me. Then I began to develop; now they can put me anywhere, I'll not find the time heavy on my hands."

"And how old were you then?"

"Going on twenty-one. So, of course, it felt tedious. Sometimes I was even out of my mind."

"And how did the superiors treat you, and the guards?"

"Not like a man but like a beast."

"Did they take you out for a walk or to work?"

"No, they only let me walk in the little corridor—in irons. When they sentenced me, they shaved half of my head—the right side—and the left they let be. And what is such shaming for? I took a kerchief and tied it over my head. The overseer flew at me, 'How dare you?' and tore the kerchief off my head."

"They made us ride cows to shame us. They put a huge hood on a fellow's head, put him on a cow's back and led her about. And the people flung mud at us for castrating ourselves. When mud would strike a fellow's face, they all roared. Once, they were thus leading us and thieves in the street and met a priest. The superiors said to him, 'Look, father, what monsters you have in your parish!' And the priest said, 'Thanks be to the Lord that there are such men in my parish. Be patient, little brothers!' And he cried. So when we turned a corner

10. In popular speech, solitary confinement.

the superiors suddenly shouted at the crowd: 'Get out of the way, scum!' And they scattered everybody, and did not shame us any more. I was sent into exile. They kept me in irons as far as Moscow and then took them off. 'He doesn't need any,' they said. I was then nearly twenty-two. We traveled by train as far as Nizhni Novgorod, then down the Volga and, by steamer, to Perm. From there we marched on foot. There were about a thousand of us. Here I saw all kinds of people; convicts and robbers and murderers. Many times on the way, they used their knives. I was careful and got rid of them. Of the ten kopecks I got for food, I would use five for food and would give five to a comrade. If anything happened, he would stand up for me. Sometimes he would win in gambling and pay me back. From Irkutsk they drove the convicts into forced labor, and we others were marched to the steppes where the brethren live, and then they set us free; you could go back or go on as you wished. I lived at Olekma as a hired hand, and there I found one old man from among ourselves, Alexin. He took me to his house, and I lived with him about four years; became like one of his family. They gave me clothes and boots, and so I was content. From home there was a rumor that father was in prison for three years."

"What for?"

"For my sake. For having concealed my act."

"Did you stay in exile long?"

"Thirty-six years; of these, I lived eleven years as a laborer. It was pretty hard, pretty hard sometimes."

"You don't regret now what you did?"

"No, no," Grigoriev replied with spirit. "I'm glad that I have lived in this way; if I had remained in the weak state, I would repent more. Even now I have great antipathy for weakness. I don't like it, my heart is not inclined that way. My nephew is weak, he drinks, and swears with any kind of words. He even beat me," Andrei Yakovlevich added smilingly.

Father looked at him inquiringly. "Why? Was he drunk?"

"No, it was on account of my sister, she joined us too. She had been married, her husband died, and so she joined us, but then she began to behave badly. I said to her: 'Well, little sister, if you are going to behave that way, we don't need you.' Then my nephew became angry. He hit me once, and I went off my feet; he hit me again, I went farther off; and, when he hit me for the third time, I fell off the house steps. He beat me—and from that very time he softened! I thanked him

for beating me, and after that he began to understand much that was good. I would have been glad if he had beaten me earlier."

Here something strange happened to father. His whole body began to shake and he could not say a word. I did not know whether he was crying or laughing. Andrei Yakovlevich kept earnestly silent.

"I am laughing from joy," father managed to say at last, with difficulty, wiping tears from his eyes. "People always say, 'Beat a man and he will soften,' and yet with you it came out the other way around! The nephew beat you, and he was the one who softened. Well—and now, have you a household of your own?" father asked, after a pause.

"No—I just live on—just so as not to interfere."

Among our visitors were some whose lives were entirely changed by father's influence. I feel reluctant to call them Tolstoyans. This word recalls to my mind flabby, weak souls stuffed with somebody else's thoughts and feelings which they had not themselves lived or thought through; people in dark blouses, sometimes with dark souls. But those of whom I would like to say a few words are others—strong and clear like the peasant sectarians.

I remember Seriozha as hardly more than a boy, at the time when, captivated by father's ideas, he left the gymnasium and set out on his wanderings. Not a little of his time was spent in prisons. He would not recognize passports and was repeatedly jailed as a vagrant. Seriozha stood the punishment meekly, feeding the lice in cells along with thieves and highwaymen, calling the jailers "brothers." In some of them, this provoked a confused awkwardness; in others, wonder and pity; and in some, hate. Seriozha never had any money. "It only brings sin," he said. He walked the highways with his pack on his back. Wherever he saw need, he stopped, helped with the work, and was fed for it. I never talked with him much, but I liked him. His eyes seemed to reflect all that was light and beautiful in the world.

"What an amazing man!" father used to say of him. "As I was walking today, I saw a man whom I did not recognize at first—all in rags and tatters, but his face shining like a senator's, with red cheeks and a joyful expression, not at all in keeping with his clothes: Sergei Popov!"¹¹

Under our old elm tree stand two slender, tall men, neatly but mod-

11. Sergei Popov died several months ago of typhus, while nursing the sick in the hospitals of Soviet Russia.

estly clad. Their every movement is elastic and graceful, their gait sure and light. They are father's followers. In winter they dance in the ballet at the Great Theater and summers they work on the soil.

When father was in Moscow in 1909, he wanted very much to see these friends of his on the stage. Unfortunately, the theater had already been closed for the summer.

"I wish I were a dancer!" father exclaimed in joking envy. "How easily and sinlessly one can live, interfering with nobody! Do whatever you fancy with your feet and have your mind free!"

Those whom I shall here call "accusers" were always received by my father and attentively heard in spite of the family's protests. We feared that such callers would have an ill effect on his health. The accusers were not numerous, but there were always several at hand. Some of them kept coming year after year. Some pleaded with him, others abused him, and all hoped, each in his own way, to lead him back to the true path.

It was from the city of Tula, as I remember, that Father Troitsky, the priest, used to come, always in the same shabby *droshki* drawn by a bony nag. He was a middle-aged man, in a black cassock and broad-brimmed hat, with thin, reddish hair, and a thin beard that was turning gray. His gait and all his movements were quick and restless, and so were his eyes, which shifted perpetually; his voice was high. At first father was friendly to the priest and conversed with him gladly; these conversations, however, always revolved around one and the same theme: Troitsky, sometimes with tears in his eyes and a tremor in his voice, implored father to return to the fold and to repent before his death. Father endeavored to prove to Troitsky that he was mistaken, that, indeed, the Orthodox Church, by fostering belief in miracles and by its rituals, obscured the true Christianity. At length a rumor reached us—I don't know how—that Troitsky was acting on definite instructions from the Holy Synod to return Tolstoy to the true path and to keep the Synod informed of the atmosphere that surrounded Tolstoy and of his influence over young people. Then our attitude toward the priest changed, and perhaps he noticed the change, for his visits became less and less frequent.

Apart from accusers from the clergy, there were others, who charged father with inconsistency. Of these I well remember Velikanov. He used to visit father when I was still a growing girl and was classified by the family as "a Dark." A tall, bony, somewhat hunch-backed man, he always carried a big walking stick and looked around

as if afraid of dogs. Colorless eyes, a very broad mouth with thin, ironic lips, protruding ears, and not a hair on his head: a dome as bald as a knee, no eyelashes, or eyebrows, or moustache. I don't remember how it was that Velikanov, from a devoted follower, became a fierce accuser of Tolstoy. I only know that he tormented my father until his last days. Not content with coming personally once in a while, he always wrote very long letters, which father patiently read from beginning to end. Through eight pages sometimes he condemned father for being a "lord" (*barin*), for luxurious living, for owning estates fictitiously transferred to the family. He wrote sharply, unsparingly, as if convinced that he had a right to judge.

Velikanov's last letter came not long before father's death. "Again a cursing letter from Velikanov," father said sadly. On the letter, I saw two initials, father's sign for "No answer." I read it, feeling revolted and angry. I wished to write to the man to stop tormenting my father, to let him die in peace. I begged father to permit me not to give him these letters, to tear them up without reading. But he would not have it so. "Never mind," he said. "It is good for me—very good."

I remember another accuser whom everybody called "Tobacco State." No one knew his real name. "Tobacco State" was a peasant from among the "old believers." He drank no wine and did not smoke. He wandered all over the land, pointing out people's failings and blaming the Government for the alcohol and the tobacco monopolies. He called Russia "a tobacco state," hence his nickname. He was about sixty years old, of medium height, with brown hair and a goatee. It always seemed to me that those narrow slits of eyes, with cruel lines under them, not only saw everything but were looking at the world with hate and cunning. But as a matter of fact, he was blind. He walked without a companion and his memory for voices was amazing: to hear a person speak once was enough for him to identify that person forever after. Once I was walking to the station. I had barely crossed the highway when I met "Tobacco State." I went by without a word.

"Good day!" he said in a sharp, rasping voice.

I was dumbfounded. I had walked very softly, on purpose, so that he would not hear me. I returned his greeting.

"This is Alexandra Lvovna?"

"Yes," I replied—and ran from him for all I was worth!

One evening, when dinner was not yet over, a servant came in with silent steps.

"Lev Nikolayevich, 'Tobacco State' is here to see you."

Father's face darkened. "I'm coming."

When he did not want to get up, he pressed both his hands against the arms of the chair, bent forward, and remained motionless for a few seconds, then, with one youthful, resolute motion, straightened himself and pushing back his chair, rose and left the room. His conversations with "Tobacco State" generally took place downstairs in the library, but that time, for some reason, the man was shown to the room of Dushan Petrovich.

I could not bear to stay upstairs. I went down and began to hover around the room, going first to one door, then to the other. The loud voice of "Tobacco State" came through the doors. It was getting sharper, more spiteful, and, at times, it became a piercing shriek. Father's muffled, constrained voice was heard only rarely. My heart ached. I felt what torment every minute of conversation with this man was to father, but I was afraid to go in. Several times I went upstairs, then downstairs again; finally, I could stand it no longer, invented a pretext and walked in. They sat on chairs facing each other. "Tobacco State" was bending forward and his mouth spurted saliva. His face was contorted with hate and he shouted, "Old liar, clown! You lie, you lie about it all! You write one thing and you do another! You get behind your wife, you live like a lord, with lackeys, with armed guards! Old swindler!"

"Enough, enough, brother," father stopped him softly. "Don't be angry. Thank you for accusing me. Thanks!—What are you here for?" he asked, turning to me.

"There's some one calling for you upstairs," I said.

Father took "Tobacco State's" hand and shook it.

"Goodbye, and thank you."

The blind man tore his hand away and remained silent, breathing angrily through his nose.

"How much I need it—very, very much—" my father whispered softly, as if to himself, as he left the room.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CONFLICT AT HOME

DORIK SUKHOTIN, Tania's stepson, was a nice boy—meek, kind, but weak willed. He studied poorly. Father often looked at him attentively.

"Do you pray, Dorik?"

Dorik dropped his big, dark eyes, blushed and whispered:

"I do."

"And how do you pray?"

"I say the Lord's Prayer—the Magnificat."

"And you never pray with words of your own?"

Dorik became confused and did not answer. Father spoke with him more and more about prayer, about pity for animals, about God; and Dorik finally became used to these conversations.

Little boys from the village used to come to father for books. He talked with them about what they had read. Gradually, these conversations became deeper in content and then took the form of regular sessions. In these talks with children, father found a realization of his idea that the chief thing in teaching is not the formal knowledge—not reading, writing, and counting—but religious and moral education. Geography was the only definite subject which they took up.

After dinner, shortly after seven o'clock, doors banged downstairs in the vestibule, and we heard the cheerful but restrained voices of the youngsters. Father hastened into his study, gathered up some sheets of paper and booklets, and smiling, went downstairs into the library. Usually about eight or ten children came, but there were days when as many as twenty gathered. Such a big crowd embarrassed father; the teaching as he planned it required an atmosphere of intimacy. The steadiest of his pupils were Dorik Sukhotin, Kolia Romashkin, Pasha Rezunov, and Petia Vorobiev. Father was very fond of them, especially of Kolia and Pasha. Pasha was a boy who liked to think, took in seriously and attentively what he had heard, and, if he asked questions, asked them with a desire to reach deeper into the subject. Blue-eyed, cheerful, attractive Kolia, with dimples in his cheeks and his chin, was very understanding, caught thoughts on the wing, lighted up and cooled down quickly. Nevertheless, father's influence was manifest in him for a time. When still a boy, he was apprenticed

by his parents to a confectioner in Tula. There he ate no meat, did not drink or smoke, and other boys called him a "Tolstoyan."

Father felt unable to have these talks with the children when any outsider was present. Sometimes, when asked insistently, he gave in and let someone listen, but he did it unwillingly. He always prepared himself for this teaching hour and wrote down in his diary or on a bit of paper what he intended to talk with the children about.

For the children's religious lesson, I have noted these simple rules: 1, not to accuse; 2, not to overeat; 3, not to indulge one's lust; 4, not to haze one's mind; 5, not to argue; 6, not to repeat unkind things heard about people; 7, not to be lazy; 8, not to tell lies; 9, not to argue; 10, to take nothing away from others by force; 11, not to torment animals; 12, to have regard for other people's work; 13, to be kind to everybody; 14, to respect the aged.¹

On March 17, 1907, father wrote down: "Lately have been occupied only by lessons with children. As I go on, I understand more and more the difficulty of this work, yet, at the same time, I see a greater hope of success. All that I have been doing so far with them is of hardly any use. Yesterday I divided them into two classes: today I have been thinking things over with the younger class."²

He was not satisfied with talking over with his youngsters various questions, but gave deep thought to the children's general moral education. After he wrote "The Teaching of Christ Told for Children," he decided to compile "A Children's Cycle of Reading" and experimented with his pupils to find out which thoughts were more intelligible to them.

Anything unclean and bad in children distressed father deeply. One day, he came home from his walk upset, and his face was so darkened and drawn that I thought he was ill.

"It was horrible!" he exclaimed. "Horrible! I was walking, the morning was so wonderful, the birds singing, the fragrance of clover—and suddenly I heard vile, stupid oaths! I came closer. Behind an acacia sat some small children, guarding the horses, and they were swearing filthily and smoking. I wept—I told them that it was not good. But will that be any help?"

Mother viewed father's work with children skeptically. "Lev Nikolayevich has a new hobby," she said indulgently. "He drills some

1. Original in the Archives of the Tolstoy Museum. The repetition in points 5 and 9 occurs in the original.

2. *Ibid.*



Tolstoy and his pupils



Count and Countess Tolstoy

Christian truths into youngsters' heads. They repeat them by heart, like parrots, and he feels assured that something will remain in their heads." And when father told us with delight how beautifully the children understood the teaching of Christ, she said, "It won't make any difference, they will grow up drunkards and thieves, anyway." Father became silent.

At that time, mother was fascinated by a new occupation: organizing a treasury for father's relics and manuscripts. She took all the manuscripts to the Moscow Historical Museum and now continued, with a jealous enthusiasm, to collect everything that she could find in old bookcases and boxes and inside the roomy divans.

She suspected the persons who surrounded father of designs for their own material advantage and tried hard to protect the interests of the family. She was angry with those who wanted to publish father's works and not only refused them the permission but even wrote an open letter to the newspapers confirming her exclusive ownership of his works written before 1880.

Father walked about, somber as a cloud, trying not to listen to the talk about the grandchildren who would be left paupers, the manuscripts which he would have wished to give to Chertkov, and the like.

"Lev Nikolayevich is not in a good humor today," mother would say, "it's always the way with him when his liver is out of order."

In January, 1908, Sergei Ivanovich Taneyev came to Yasnaia Poliana. In the evening Taneyev, old lady Schmidt, mother and Varvara Mikhailovna, who did typing for mother, all gathered in my room. Mother was animated, her big eyes glowed, her movements were nervous and indecisive. It seemed to me that her excited mood made her put a strange, exaggerated meaning into everything she said. Maria Alexandrovna tried, as usual, to smooth out everything, noticing nothing disagreeable and emphasizing everything that was good. Taneyev was cheerful as always, laughed good-naturedly, and did not notice mother's tension.

"Shall I play something for you?" he asked.

"Please, we want it very much! Please!" we replied in chorus.

He played something, then began one of Mendelssohn's "Songs Without Words." Suddenly mother burst out sobbing. Taneyev rose from the piano and walked up and down the room, rubbing his hands. All felt awkward. Only Maria Alexandrovna exclaimed sympathetically.

"My dear little soul, Sofia Andreyevna! What is the matter with you?" I looked at mother. Her head was shaking. Notwithstanding her black hair and beautiful complexion, she was already an old woman. I felt endless pity for her, and this feeling, mixed with awkwardness before those present, was very painful. I rose abruptly.

"Thanks, Sergei Ivanovich," I said. "Let us go upstairs."

Sergei Ivanovich came again the following February. Father was always amiable and friendly with him, played chess with him, listened to his playing and admired it, told Taneyev about his own work.

This time Sofia Alexandrovna Stakhovich was visiting us, too. Amusing, witty, an excellent student of literature, she always brought animation into our house. She did not understand father's teaching and did not sympathize with it, but I do not believe that there was anyone who valued his artistic works more highly than did the brother and sister Stakhovich. Sofia Alexandrovna knew *War and Peace* pretty nearly by heart. I remember how she was once reading aloud when father came into the big hall and stopped in the door, his hands in his belt as usual. When she paused, he asked: "What is it you are reading? Not badly written!" Instead of answering, we burst out laughing—Sofia Alexandrovna was reading *War and Peace*.

As usual, Sofia Alexandrovna cheered us all up. During the day, we went for a ride. I drove the first sleigh, having Taneyev with me. He was jubilant and laughed like a child, and, when the sleigh was jolted, he did not try to keep his balance but dropped into the snow like a sack of flour.

"You're impossible, Sasha!" Sofia Alexandrovna cried to me from the next sleigh. "You have no idea how to drive!"

"Whoa!" I shouted and the sleigh stopped. "Sofia Alexandrovna, you have insulted me. Kindly take my place and drive this sleigh!"

We changed places and went on. I kept looking at the head sleigh. There was a hole in the road, the sleigh listed. I saw a terrific strain in the slender, elastic figure of Sofia Alexandrovna. With her slight body she tried in vain to counterbalance the sleigh. Sergei Ivanovich was ponderously listing, together with the sleigh, in the direction of the hole.

"Ah!" Sofia Alexandrovna exclaimed, stopping the horse when Sergei Ivanovich was already floundering in the snow, shaking with soundless laughter.

"Aha!" I cried with triumph. "Aha! Who is a poor driver, now?"

When we came home Sofia Alexandrovna could not express her indignation strongly enough. "But he is simply a sack of flour, that's

all! A chunk of wood! I shout to him, 'Bend to the right! Bend to the right,' and he just laughs and rolls down into the snow!"

But no matter how merry we were on the surface, we were anxious and heavy at heart. Mother repeatedly asked Sergei Ivanovich to play her the "Song Without Words" again, putting some mysterious meaning into her words, which made all those present feel awkward, including Sergei Ivanovich himself.

In mother's notebook, under February 22, 1908, there is this entry: "The day of the heart's anniversary. Went riding. Oh, this 'Song Without Words'!"

The spring that followed, mother was busy writing a novel entitled "Song Without Words." She gave it to father to read and was surprised when he did not like it.

Illiterate, stupid stewards irritated the peasants more and more. Unable, because of their ignorance, to increase the profits from the estate which they managed so poorly, they tried to raise the rent which the peasants paid for the land; instead of repairing the hedges to keep the peasants' cattle out of our park, flower garden, and vegetable gardens, they impounded the animals and fined the peasants heavily for spoiled crops and hay. The forest was poorly guarded, the forest guards were negligent, and the thievery of lumber increased. Bitterness between the peasants and the estate grew. Young peasant lads misbehaved themselves in our vegetable gardens, in our cold frames, even in the grain sheds, and cellars. The steward and gardener came and complained to mother.

"It's impossible to live in peace with these people," they said. "There's nothing we can do with them. We've got to call in Circassians or Government guards."

The example of our neighbor Mme Zvegintseva also influenced mother: that lady had the police post stationed on her estate and surrounded herself with a camp of mounted Circassians and guards. Once, after a scuffle between our gardener and some peasant lads, during which someone shot at somebody else, mother, after conferring with brother Andrei, decided to ask the governor of Tula for protection. It is needless to relate how highly pleased that dignitary was! Yasnaya Poliana, the home of the man who preached nonresistance to evil by violence, needed the protection of the authorities! The authorities, of course, tried to make a mountain out of a molehill. The scuffle in the vegetable garden was made into something like an armed attack on the Tolstoy estate. The Tula authorities arrived in

our village: the governor, the police chief, the captain, the inspector, and others. The frightened peasants came out to welcome them with bread and salt. A number of peasants were arrested and thrown into jail.

And between father and mother painful altercations took place which did not improve the situation or bring any peace into the home but only created a still greater rift between them and filled their hearts with bitterness. Sometimes, wincing with pain, father quickly walked away from mother.

"Enough, enough, Sonia," he would say. "If you cannot understand that life with police guards, who seize peasants and arrest them and throw them into prison, is intolerable to me, there is no use in talking."

"Then what do you want? To have all of us here shot down?" mother asked, following father with nervous steps. "Yesterday they shot at the gardener, tomorrow they will shoot at us, they will carry off everything."

"Oh, my God! Then how do you expect me to be quiet? This is a veritable hell! You know that it would be impossible to create worse surroundings for me than you have done. I cannot live any longer amid this terrific hatred which is growing daily around us. To think that we have seven armed men on the estate—"

"You have waved everything aside, you don't care—and what shall I do? We cannot stand aside and let ourselves be robbed, can we?"

Such conversations occurred nearly every day. The peasants, offended by our having called in the guards, came to ask father's protection; father went to mother.

"A disagreeable conversation with Lev Nikolayevich on account of the guards," her notebook says. "There is no way out of my predicament, I am morally imprisoned, and then I get the blows too." And another note: "From early morning on, Lev Nikolayevich has been disagreeable toward the guards."

"I have been doubting—am I right in keeping my silence and would it not be better perhaps to go away, to disappear as did Boulanger?"³ father wrote in his notebook. "But I desire this principally because this would be *for my own sake*, for the sake of getting rid of this life which has become poisoned on all sides. And yet it is my conviction that to suffer life, such as it is, is what I need." July 2, 1908.

"The same torment. I struggle, but struggle poorly. Life here at

3. Boulanger disappeared, leaving a letter saying that he had committed suicide.

Yasnaia Poliana has become entirely poisoned for me. Wherever I go, it's everywhere shame and sorrow." July 3, 1908.

Presently, of the seven guards, only two remained on the estate. In the room next to the vestibule settled a clumsy, stout man with a revolver on his hip. Another lived with the servants. They brought in a smell of tar, bad tobacco, and, in general, of something coarse, and not clean.

A big theft of timber was revealed in Grumont—199 oaks. The proofs against the peasants were insufficient. Everybody intervened, asking mother to drop the case. Peasants came to ask father's protection. He spoke with mother, but she remained adamant.

"It is annoying that the *zemsky nachalnik*⁴ has exonerated the peasants in the theft of 199 oaks," mother wrote in her notebook, "and excused their refusal to work out their debt. I am sending a complaint to the Court of Justice."

My brothers Andrei and Lioba took mother's side.

"What else can we do?" brother Lev said. "We must either repudiate everything, as father has done, or else we must manage our affairs properly. We cannot be expected to permit the muzhiks to steal everything."

Father always tried to protect the peasants and intervened with mother, asking her to waive their fines; consequently the guards began to feel angry at him.

"How is that possible now, Your Excellency," they complained to mother whom they considered "a real mistress" and therefore esteemed. "What does this mean? We work hard and do our best to keep people from stealing, and the Count forgives them, shows them the way to do it! Just as you wish, but it can't go on this way, it isn't right."

Listening to such talk made me boil with indignation. "To drive them out of here!" the thought kept tormenting me, "to drive them out so that there will be no trace of them left in Yasnaia Poliana!"

But father tried to approach the guards as humans, to approach their souls.

"Have you a family?" he would ask one of them.

"Sure. Why not? A wife and two children," the guard replied.

4. The *zemsky nachalnik* was a district chief with both administrative and judiciary powers, appointed by the Government from among the landed gentry to control the peasant population. The law providing for the office of *zemsky nachalnik* was promulgated in 1885 and was one of the spectacular features of the political reaction during the reign of Alexander III.

"And what made you take up such bad work?" father continued to question.

"Got to eat and drink."

During the last year of the guards' stay, I had a disagreeable experience with them. Father was visiting sister Tania at the time. The guards caught a peasant on the pond, fishing with a net. The big pond had always been considered common property, the side adjacent to the village being the peasants' and the side toward the estate the Tolstoys'. Of course, it was difficult to decide whether the man was fishing on their portion or on ours. But the guards took the net away from him and brought him to the estate office. I found the peasant, wet and blue from cold, standing before the guard and begging to have his net returned to him. The guard swore and shouted at him, shook him by the shoulder and lifted his hand to strike the man. I cried out:

"How dare you? How dare you beat him?"

"I'm doing what's got to be done," he replied insolently.

I trembled with rage, my sight became hazy, and the breath stuck in my throat.

"Villain!" I shouted, "give that net back to him at once, and let the peasant go!"

The guard did it immediately, and I went to have an explanation with mother.

Several days later, the police captain came and demanded that I apologize to the guard for having insulted him while he was on duty. I flared up again and wrote a letter to the captain telling him that I was not going to apologize to that good-for-nothing under any circumstances, and that if he considered it necessary he could bring my case before the courts.

The next day I went to the governor of Tula. I was received by Vice-Governor Lopukhin. When I told him of my clash with the guard he remarked, with an ironic smile:

"In all the province of Tula there is only one estate left where Government guards are still kept, and that estate is—Yasnaia Poliana."

"Then why don't you take them away?" I exclaimed.

"Why don't we take them away? We wanted to."

"Well?"

Lopukhin was looking at me with a little sardonic smile, conscious of his superiority—and my stupidity.

"When we wanted to take your guards away, the Countess wrote us a request that they be left."

"You don't mean—!"

"Yes, I do."

He showed me my mother's letter.

"The Countess leaves nice documents in our hands!"

I returned home altogether upset and repeated to mother my conversation with Lopukhin, pointing out the intolerable position in which she put father.

"Everything can go," I said, "not just a few oaks but all of Yasnaia Poliana, everything, everything! But father must not be put in the position he is in now!"

"It was none of your business to interfere," brother Liova said to me. "Now you've just made a fool of yourself, and that's all there is to it. We can't permit the muzhiks to be lawless on our estate."

"I know well enough that it's a matter of indifference to you if all of Yasnaia is carried off piece by piece," mother said. "But I have no right to reason that way, I have children, grandchildren."

The guards stayed on our estate for two years. As I remember, after the occurrence I have just described, mother decided to replace them with a mounted Circassian. But this made very little difference in the situation.

Strong as father's constitution was, constant worry finally broke it down. In March, 1908, he had his first fainting spell. He grew suddenly pale and swayed on his chair. Gusev, who was in the room, wanted to hold him up but was unable. Father slowly slipped to the floor and lost consciousness. Mother and Dushan Petrovich came running. When father regained consciousness he could not remember anything. He had forgotten who was in the house and what events had taken place and had lost his understanding of time.

From this day on, his fainting spells kept recurring.

CHAPTER XIX

NEIGHBORS

OUR closest neighbors—the peasants of the village of Yasnaia Poliana—were the farthest away from father's influence. He was to them the estate owner; our house was "the master's court." Father often wanted to talk with them about their life, their needs, their beliefs, but seldom succeeded. The peasants always tended to turn the conversation to questions of their household and farming, to ask for some favor or to make a complaint.

"Very well, very well," father said hastily in such cases, "I will speak with Sofia Andreyevna."

"Please do, Your Excellency, please do the best you can."

"Yes, all right, all right, goodbye."

Often during his walks, he met village women carrying heavy sacks of fresh grass on their backs.

"Good day," father greeted them, never waiting for them to greet him first.

"Good day, Your Excellency!"

The women dropped the sacks to the ground and stood wiping their faces with the edges of their skirts.

"Eh, Axinia, this must be pretty heavy for you to carry," father would say to an old woman.

"And how not, Your Excellency, how not!" she replied. "My poor back aches, and here your steward has lately fenced your courtyard around so we can't walk through—got to walk all the way around—see what a stretch."

Such was nearly always the end of father's talks with our neighbor peasants, and there were only a few among them with whom he felt at ease. Sometimes a former pupil of his came from Tula, Vasili Stepanovich Morozov, a wise and sensitive man and, what was more important, one who loved father—he preserved his childhood attachment for him. Father was glad every time he came and they always talked with animation of the old-time school.

Another peasant whom father used to visit was Peter Osipov. He was a confirmed idler whose wife and children worked for him. During the busiest harvest time he used to lie on the ground in his orchard, while every able-bodied person in the village was bending his

back out in the field. Around him bees buzzed and butterflies fluttered; the smell of sun-rotted apples was in the air. Peter Osipov lay and read. Father would call on him and start a conversation; no matter what the subject was Peter knew all about it. He knew geography especially well. Many times it happened that father forgot the location of some place on the globe and Peter corrected him.

"Amazing, amazing," father used to say. "Such memory, such a head! Had he been born in another environment he would surely have become a great scholar."

"A loafer—a pure loafer—he couldn't be worse," his family used to say of him. "People work and he lies there stretched out on the ground like a boar, all God's day long, reading books. And what-ever's the use of them books!"

Peter Osipov had none of the customary servility of a peasant. I used to come to his orchard once in a while for prunes. He would not even greet me, not to speak of getting up, but only called his daughter: "Hey, Liuba! Come and weigh out some prunes—they've come from the master's estate for prunes," and thereupon he was again deep in reading.

The peasants of the neighboring villages were much more under father's influence than those of Yasnaia Poliana. I remember an incident which gratified him very much. Next to the Osviannikovo farm, where "old lady Schmidt" lived, was a small village. Old lady Schmidt had many friends among its inhabitants who often came to see her or ask her advice. One day a peasant, who was a friend of hers, told her that it had been decided to open a government vodka shop—a *monopolia*, as the people called it—at his village.

"But we don't want it," he said. "It's nothing but temptation. And so the whole village decided that there shouldn't be any *monopolia* in our place. And all of a sudden there came the officials from the town. 'Your decision,' they say, 'is of no account in this matter. We'll open a vodka shop in this village just the same.'"

"But how can they," Maria Alexandrovna asked excitedly, "if the village people object?"

"That's just what they're telling us: your decision isn't of any account, they say. It's been decided to open it, they say, and that's all there is to it."

Maria Alexandrovna was upset and at once went to "dear Lev Nikolayevich" and Tania for advice. Tania went to Tula repeatedly, exerting herself on behalf of the Skuratovo peasants; father wrote letters to authorities, asking them to abide by the peasants' decision.

If I remember rightly, the case went as far as the governor's office. Father followed it with the most vivid interest, glad at the firmness of the peasants in this matter and indignant at the violence that was going to be done to their will. After a stubborn struggle the peasants came out victorious: the *monopolia* never was opened in their village.

Afanasi Ageyev, a peasant from a village about three versts from Yasnaia Poliana, read father's books and often came to talk with him. He was a big, powerful man with a broad red beard, resolute and bold, and undoubtedly ranked high among his fellow villagers in intellectual development. He had influence over some, while others hated him. One day, to the horror of his family, he took all the sacred images from the walls of his house and burned them, saying that God is a spirit, and a sacred image nothing but a piece of board. He was reported to the Government, arrested, tried, and exiled to Siberia. Father was much pained. He took Afanasi's fate very much to heart and exerted himself on his behalf trying to have his sentence eased, but did not succeed.

During the summer time, our neighbors were the most frequent visitors at Yasnaia Poliana. Some of them were born citizens of the province of Tula, others only came to stay at Yasnaia Poliana in summer in order to be able to see father oftener.

In August, 1904, Pavel Ivanovich Biriukov came back from exile. He was one of father's oldest and most devoted friends. A long time before, together with Chertkov and Gorbunov, he had founded the publishing enterprise "Postrednik" and suffered Government persecution for helping the Dukhobors. Biriukov was working over a biography of father and asked him to write his childhood memories. Father at first hesitated, but later this thought carried him away.

"Posha" keeps asking me to write my memories, and I do not feel like doing it," father used to say. "But what I wish to do is to try to note everything I think and feel, every hour, every minute of my life. People will later read it and will refuse to believe it possible that Tolstoy thought of such trifles. And yet I catch myself often, along with serious, philosophic thoughts, suddenly thinking: Hope somebody won't take and eat my oranges!"

Biriukov rented a peasant house in the village of Yasnaia Poliana and lived there. He and his wife were very agreeable company for my father.

Orlov the artist, whose paintings father admired so much, lived in a

1. Diminutive of Pavel.

peasant home in the village. He was painting his picture "Corporal Punishment," and father often called to see his work. Father especially liked "The Benediction of a New Vodka Shop."² He had Orlov's paintings in his study and enjoyed pointing them out to those who called on him. Orlov had a very large family, about ten all told. He was in great need, earning but little, but the Orlovs never complained. Nikolai Vasilievich always had a joyful smile and cheered up others.

"Guests again!" mother would say, "where shall I put them all? Every room is filled."

"Ah, dear Sofia Andreyevna," Orlov would exclaim, jumping up from his chair, "I'll take them to my house right away, we have lots of room."

"Keep your seat, keep your seat," father would stop him, his eyes shining as they always did when something touched him. "Of course we know you have lots of room. What difference does it make whether there are twelve or twenty-five people in a peasant hut?"

"You are mistaken, I assure you," Orlov retorted with the most serious and sincere expression. "It's very nice and roomy at our house. The boys sleep in the shed and I in the little room, it's only the grandmother and the little ones—"

"I know, I know! And we are crowded in our twenty rooms!"

There was still another follower of father's living in Yasnaia Poliana: Sergei Dmitrievich Nikolayev, with his wife and small children. Nikolayev was an authority on the writings of Henry George and translated most of those printed by the "Posrednik." When he visited us, conversation usually centered around the agrarian question.

Ivan Ivanovich Gorbunov, with his wife Elena Evgenievna and children, lived at Osviannikovo and often visited us, coming on foot or else driving over with Maria Alexandrovna Schmidt behind her lazy old horse Voronok. Gorbunov loved father without reservations and admired his thoughts and his writings. Chertkov and Biriukov, in the course of time, discontinued their participation in the *Posrednik* publishing enterprise, but Gorbunov carried on alone. His greatest joy was to publish Tolstoy's works.

Poor Gorbunov often found himself between two fires. Mother was displeased whenever he attempted to publish in a popular edition

2. Those who strictly observed church customs never moved into new premises without having them blessed by the priest in a special short service. The vodka shops being Government property, this custom was, of course, observed with regard to them.

through the *Posrednik* anything written by father before 1880, and, as to his publishing any of the newer works, Chertkov vetoed that. Nevertheless, he managed to publish some things, selling his editions cheaply, making no profits on them, and barely paying the expenses of the enterprise. He worked hand in hand with his quiet wife, who was as much devoted to the work as her husband and labored without respite.

Ivan Ivanovich Gorbunov sent father unlimited quantities of his editions for distribution. These booklets, which were sold at one kopeck each, gave father especial satisfaction. He sorted them into three divisions according to quality; I ordered a little bookcase and we placed them on the shelves. He gave them away to passers by and to children. Some of the best he intended to include in the "Children's Cycle of Reading."

None of the neighbors gave father as much joy as did old lady Schmidt, who lived on Tania's farm at Ovsianikovo. She had a small peasant hut with a little entrance hall and a room with a Russian stove and a plain table in the middle, pig-iron kettles, pot holders, and everything that formed the customary equipment of a peasant household. Next to this was a very small room with one little window, where she slept. Here stood a simple bed, a table with a copy of the gospels, and a roomy wall shelf with the books of "dear Lev Nikolayevich," a few manuscripts of his, and copies which she made for herself. At first, as soon as anything new was written by father, she used to come and copy it for herself. Later, I made an extra copy for her on my typewriter.

"Thanks to you, Sasha," she used to say, "now I'll be sure it was Lev Nikolayevich himself who wrote this, and nobody did any correcting on it!"

Maria Alexandrovna lived alone. In a neighboring small peasant hut lived a consumptive watchman, Miron, whom Tania hired to guard her farm. The nearest village was one verst distant; the Gorbunovs only came in summer; I feared for the little old woman at times. When calling on her in winter, I sometimes found the house snowed under, or else it was impossible even to drive up to it. I often had a hard time driving through snowdrifts, unharnessing and harnessing again when the horse was stuck in them.

In summer, when father and I came to see her, we would find her either weeding her garden, picking strawberries, or simply sitting and reading in the little watchman's shed, guarding her berries from



Maria Alexandrovna Schmidt



Beggars at Yasnaya Polyana

thieves. The minute she saw us she lighted up with joy. Her thin face and sunken cheeks shone with happiness. "My dear Lev Nikolayevich!" He was just as glad to see her. They sat down, sometimes right there in the berry patch, sometimes on the little bench outside the house, and talked of things that were dear to them both. Father used to say: "I'll go to see Maria Alexandrovna for some strength and cheer."

Sometimes Maria Alexandrovna had attacks of coughing and suffocation and was so ill that she could hardly speak. She lay in the little shed without moving and only whistled so that the village urchins might know that she was there and would not steal the berries.

"You feel ill, don't you, Maria Alexandrovna?" father would ask her. "Do you want me to send the doctor to you?"

"Don't say that, dear Lev Nikolayevich! What an idea!" she answered, waving her hands. "What do I need the doctor for? The Lord be with you! I am so happy, so happy!"

Maria Alexandrovna earned her living by raising strawberries and selling them at Tula. She bought herself a horse and a small buggy, and in the morning when the sun was still quite low she drove her Voronok to town. She never touched him with the whip, would not even slap him with the reins, and only pleaded with him; and Voronok always moved at a pace. Her other source of income was the big, healthy cow Manichka, for which she had the tenderest affection. Heaven forbid that Manichka should not get fed on time or not have fresh water. "Look out, Sasha," Maria Alexandrovna once warned me when I was carting in her hay from the meadow, "see that you don't put any of those Hadji Murats³ in my hay, or Manichka will prick her tongue on them!"

The other member of her household, her little dog Shavochka, was an animal I could not stand. Maria Alexandrovna had picked her up when she was a puppy. Someone had thrown her out into the snow and all four paws had been frozen. Shavochka became embittered against all humankind. Maria Alexandrovna did not want her to have puppies, so she had to take Shavochka out on a chain, driving off with difficulty the bold village dogs. One day she chanced upon the idea of making a pair of trousers for Shavochka.

"No, no, my little dear," she said to the dog tenderly, "don't you think of carousing around. You stay virgin, yes virgin, you bad thing!"

3. In *Hadji Murat*, Tolstoy likens the hero, a Caucasian rebel chieftain, to a vigorous, beautiful and rebellious burdock which he found mowed down by the roadside.

If there was something interesting going on at our house, I always went to fetch Maria Alexandrovna. She was much excited on these occasions. "But, Sasha, how can I go? How can I leave Manichka? And Shavochka?" I sat and patiently waited for the old lady to dress for the visit. She took out a clean dress, carefully combed her blond, slightly gray hair, parting it in the middle, took off the coarse shoes; and all dressed up and solemn, gave the last instructions to the watchman or the girl who stayed with her the last years. "See that you don't forget to water Manichka in time, and give her food, will you, and give Shavochka some bread tomorrow morning! And be sure you milk out Manichka thoroughly!"

In 1910, Ovsianikovo caught fire; the house where the Gorbunovs stayed in summer and Maria Alexandrovna's hut burned down. Everything the little old woman possessed was destroyed by fire, including father's manuscripts and the copies which she had gathered with such devotion for many years and his letters to her; and Shavochka, too, died in the flames.

It was on the morning of July 2. Maria Alexandrovna had stayed with us overnight. I was asleep when niania came in.

"Sasha! Get up; Maria Alexandrovna's house has burned down!"

I was too sleepy to understand.

"Don't you hear? Elena Evgenievna Gorbunova has come. Ovsianikovo has burned down."

I jumped out of bed and ran to the old lady to prepare her for the news. She was still asleep in her accustomed place, behind the partitioned bookcases dividing the library.

"Maria Alexandrovna! Something very annoying has happened."

"Fire?"

That was all my preparation was good for! The next minute we were both crying. Holding her head, the little old lady swayed back and forth and tears streamed down her thin cheeks.

"The manuscripts! The manuscripts! And Shavochka! My God! My God!"

Sometimes, after dinner, neighbors gathered at our house—the Gorbunovs, Nikolayev, and Maria Alexandrovna. Pushing his chair away from the table, his legs crossed, father talked of the Henry George system, of how beautifully it could be applied in Russia.

"Could any estate owner stand being taxed for, say, ten thousand dessiatine,⁴ at ten rubles a dessiatine? Of course not. But the peasant

4. One dessiatine = 2.7 acres.

who works with his own hands and pays nothing for labor could easily pay his tax, especially if all the other taxes were abolished."

Nikolayev droned assent in his bass voice, quoting Henry George whom he knew nearly by heart; Ivan Ivanovich made affirmative remarks once in a while; and Maria Alexandrovna listened with bated breath.

Then suddenly bells would tinkle softly, there was the rattle of wheels and the beating of hoofs on the road. The smart carriage of our neighbor Mme Zvegintseva, drawn by a four-in-hand, swung up to the entrance. On the box, next to the coachman, sat a fully armed Circassian; two Government guards accompanied the carriage on horseback. Mother went down to the vestibule to meet the distinguished visitor. We heard exclamations from downstairs:

"Comment va la santé du comte?"

"Merci. Le temps est beau, n'est ce pas?"

Throwing her cloak to the waiting lackey, Mme Zvegintseva put her little ladies' size Browning on the shelf under the mirror. She and mother came into the big hall, talking animatedly. Old lady Schmidt looked at the visitor fearfully from the corner of an eye; the rest of those present also recoiled. Father, who always remained amiable, replied to the French greetings of the neighbor. But a little later mother and Mme Zvegintseva remained alone.

One evening, during such a conversation between the two ladies, father came into the room, looking very indignant.

"Is that your nasty thing there under the mirror?" he asked.

"I don't understand you, Count," Mme Zvegintseva replied with great surprise.

"There is a revolver there, is it yours?" father repeated his question.

"Yes, Count, the nights are so dark and the muzhiks, you know, are brutes! Real brutes!"

"It is very bad! Very bad!" father replied.

And another time, Chertkov, finding her revolver, stuffed father's article "Thou Shalt Not Kill" into its handle and loaded the pockets of Mme Zvegintseva's cloak with forbidden literature.

CHAPTER XX

CHERTKOV

VLADIMIR GRIGORIEVICH CHERTKOV was the tsar of the Tolstoyans, a big handsome man with aristocratic manners, sure and serene. In his eyes, which sometimes darkened with anger, in his narrow forehead, in the arched Roman nose, there was so much power and authority that people involuntarily did his bidding. "This man sacrificed everything for me," father used to say. "It was not enough that he gave up his former rich court life; he has devoted all his strength to the publication of my works, he was exiled for me." Father considered him his closest friend, and so when Chertkov returned from exile in 1906 and settled on the Yasenki farm only five versts from Yasnaia Poliana, father felt that his coming was a great happiness.

There were two houses on the Yasenki place—one small but passably well arranged, where Vladimir Grigorievich and his family settled; and another, very large and neglected, with big windows and high ceilings. In this mansion the doors would not shut, windowpanes were missing, swallows made nests in the corners of the ceilings, and moss and mold covered the walls. For its enormous size, this house was nicknamed "Taurida Palace," with ironic reference to the seat of the State Duma at Petrograd. In it lived Chertkov's friends and helpers, who flocked to him from all sides. Vladimir Grigorievich called helpers all who did any kind of work in his house, from secretarial duties to dishwashing; he never used the word "servant." The crowd of those "friends" was big and extremely variegated: there were persons with fine features and tender hands; strong, healthy fellows used to heavy work; and long-haired wanderers with the faces of Christian hermits. Most of them were typical "Tolstoyans" who understood little of Tolstoy's fundamental teaching and seized on the secondary and superficial. This strange life in Chertkov's home was perhaps the result of an attempt to combine literary work, farming, and suitable living conditions for his ailing wife and for the periodical visits of his mother, a lady-in-waiting of the old Empress.

I chanced one day inside the "Taurida Palace." It was a strange sight: the vast rooms yawned with emptiness, heaps of matted straw lay in the corners, on which the "God-seekers" slept, nowhere was

there any furniture. At nightfall the lodgers of the "Taurida Palace" gathered from all sides and settled for the night, covering themselves with their clothing.

That summer Varvara Mikhailovna Feokritova, with whom we had become good friends, finished typing for mother her "History of My Life." She planned to go to Moscow, but the meeting with Chertkov made a deep impression on her, and she wavered in her decision. Then one day Anna Konstantinovna Chertkova came to see us. Sitting in a large armchair, thin, emaciated, with large eyes, she sang sectarian songs. There was so much yearning in her singing that a shiver went down my spine. Varvara Mikhailovna ran out of the room, sobbing.

"Oh, how I would like to stay with them!" she said. Vladimir Grigorievich gladly took her as a typist.

It was raining hard when I drove Varvara Mikhailovna to Yasenki with her luggage. We stopped at the little house where the Chertkovs lived. Varvara Mikhailovna stepped into the living-room. Animated conversation was going on, but it did not occur to anyone to help her. Evening came. Varvara Mikhailovna timidly asked someone where her room was.

"Go to the 'Taurida Palace'!"

"How does one get there?"

A barefoot Tolstoyan went with her. With great difficulty she made her way through deep mire to the huge, dark house. The Tolstoyan disappeared. There were no lights. It was raining, and, in the gloom of the night, she could faintly make out a long suite of rooms, dark and empty, stretching into the distance. Feeling her way around, Varvara Mikhailovna found an armful of slightly damp straw, spread it out and lay down without undressing. She did not sleep at all. At dawn she saw some figures roaming about the house. She asked them where she could wash herself. "Down there," they answered, pointing to a pond that gleamed through the bare trees. "We always wash there." That same day Varvara Mikhailovna left for Moscow.

Later on, Chertkov bought from me half of the Teliatinki farm and started the construction of a house with outbuildings. The house was to be large, with two stories, built on a corridor scheme like a hotel. Only the rooms in the right and the left wings were a little cosier, with verandahs and Italian windows. They were for Chertkov's mother and for his wife. The "helpers" were to live in the upper story. There was also a large hall for gatherings, theatricals, and lectures. The house progressed slowly, although a good deal of money

was spent on it. Father and I went to see it, and Vladimir Grigorievich showed us the various rooms. Father walked about without saying anything. When we came out into the yard, he said to me, "It's sad." And to my inquiring glance he added: "Of course, every one has his sins, and yet it pains me to see Chertkov build such a very large luxurious house, and spend so much money!"

At that time, Vladimir Grigorievich planned an enormous work: "A Collection of the Thoughts of L. N. Tolstoy." This "Collection" was to include all the thoughts expressed by father at any time in his artistic or philosophic works, in letters and in diaries. Many people were taken on to help in the work. At the head of it stood a man whose opinions were near father's, the philosopher Feodor Alexeyevich Strakhov. But the other helpers were selected not by their knowledge and ability to work but by their proximity to the convictions of Vladimir Grigorievich. I do not know how much the work itself actually progressed—it was never published—but the number of helpers increased considerably.

Around Chertkov's small farm of ten dessiatine some fifteen helpers gathered, and as usual where there is no master and too many people, everything was done in a slipshod manner. But the Chertkovs did not let that bother them. Dima, Chertkov's son, felt a great inclination for rural life. He went about unwashed and argued with his father—who objected to his slovenliness—that if one wishes to live with peasants one must "simplify" to the end.

At twelve o'clock noon, all the inhabitants of Teliatinki—some thirty or forty persons—came out of their respective nooks, gathered in the dining-room and sat down without haste at a great, long table. Anna Grigorievna—the housekeeper—and her helpers placed huge pots, bowls, and frying pans upon the table. At first it seemed to me that complete equality and brotherhood reigned, but I soon noticed some differences. If I chanced to come during dinner, I was given a seat at the upper end of the table. Here sat Vladimir Grigorievich and Feodor Alexeyevich Strakhov, and, in a big armchair lined with pillows, half reclined Anna Konstantinovna. The middle part of the table was occupied by the Tolstoyans who worked on the "Collection"—typists and secretaries—and at the farther end sat the laborers, night watchmen, washerwomen, carpenters, herdsmen, and the like. The boundaries between these three categories were noticeable. The youngsters in the crowd defined them as "first, second, and third class."

Once I happened to overhear the following exchange of remarks:

"Look, look," said Tishka, a bright little boy whose job was watching the horses on the estate. "Aliosha is trying to squeeze into the first class."

"Well, he likes rice cakes and jam and stewed fruit! I guess he's tired of boiled potatoes and sunflower oil!"

I scarcely knew Chertkov before his exile. I was then a little girl. But father considered him his friend, and that was enough for me. I loved him and tried not to notice things which I disliked about him, and there was a time when I was under his influence.

His coming changed many things in our accustomed train of life. He often brought a photographer—an Englishman—who photographed father during work. Everything that came from father's pen Chertkov immediately read and criticized, sometimes asking father to change certain passages.

"You know," he would say, "my wife and I have thought it over—you had better change this place here."

"You really think so?" father asked. "It seems to me I meant it just as it is."

But Chertkov insisted, and father did as requested.

All this caused me to wonder but did not arouse any enmity in me. Father was alone. Masha was dead; Tania was occupied by her family; his sons did not sympathize with his ideas and argued with him, some stupidly and rudely, others stubbornly and with enthusiasm, as though a feeling of exaggerated honesty made them insist that they disagreed with his opinions.

When I think of the people who surrounded father, I feel inclined to classify them into two groups: people who always felt a certain right to make demands, who never had enough, were always displeased with others, thought everybody else to blame and accepted sacrifices not only without appreciating them but sometimes without even noticing them; and people like sister Masha and Maria Alexandrovna who never demanded anything of others and were always sacrificing. But no one sacrificed more than father, and nobody felt as humble toward others as he did.

With regard to Chertkov, this feeling was especially strong. The thought of Chertkov's sacrifices never left father, and Vladimir Grigorievich seemed to be entitled to make any demands on him. I remember one case where the violence which he did to father's will was especially evident. I was too young to know much at the time the *Posrednik* publishing enterprise was founded and did its early work, but it always seemed strange to me that Chertkov, who was one of its

founders, tried to publish father's work not through the *Posrednik* but through the Sytin publishing house, a commercial firm like any other. When father concluded his fourth volume of *Readings for Every Day*, Chertkov decided to give it to Sytin to print. Father protested, but it was hard to argue with Vladimir Grigorievich, and he had his way. Sytin, not literary but a good business man, would have grasped eagerly at an opportunity to publish any of father's artistic works; but the collection of *Readings for Every Day* was of little interest to him. He shamelessly procrastinated with the printing.

"Oh, this terrible Sytin!" father used to exclaim. "This terrible Sytin! What a pity that Chertkov did not give this book to dear Ivan Ivanovich to publish, he would have done it long ago!" Father was evidently sincerely hurt. And Ivan Ivanovich Gorbunov, who was kindness personified, to whom father's tranquillity was above all other considerations, tacitly submitted to Chertkov's wishes and never let father hear a word about how deeply offended he felt. "Terrible Sytin" never gave father the delight of seeing his collection printed. Father died before it came out.

Mother looked at Chertkov with especial prejudice and disliked everything about him: his coming so often, bringing with him "dark" people who tired father; his going into father's study during working hours, which nobody had ever done before. Once that change had been made, she, too, went to say good morning to father at about noon, before taking her coffee. She was indignant when Chertkov sent father's manuscripts to England, to his own archives there; she tried to take whatever she could to the Historical Museum in Moscow. Into this task she now put even more nervous energy and fuss than before, as though trying to wrest the manuscripts from Chertkov.

There was another domain which, until late years, father had carefully preserved from the eyes of others and which now became accessible. Formerly, I had been the only one to touch his diaries. I copied them, trying to do it as inconspicuously as possible. Now Chertkov often looked through father's daily entries. Mother, indignant, decided that she had as much if not more right than Chertkov to read the diaries. The following words which father wrote in his diary in September, 1907, did not help:

"I feel my hands bound again in the matter of writing this diary by the knowledge that Sonia and Chertkov will read it. I shall try to forget about them. The last two or three days, a depressed state of mind."

Life became more complicated with the arrival of Chertkov. But in March, 1909, he was suddenly forbidden by the Government to live in the province of Tula, and he and his whole family moved to Krekshino, the estate of some relatives near Moscow.

CHAPTER XXI

THE JUBILEE

IN the spring of 1908, father, after writing his article "The Law of Violence and the Law of Love," again devoted himself to the *Cycle of Reading*, which he was now finishing by sections rather than by months. "If it is granted me to finish this work, it will be a complete statement of my world outlook," he said. Later this collection was published by the *Posrednik* as *The Path of Life*, in separate small issues.

But father's spirit was not at ease. This was the period of strong reaction after the revolutionary movement of 1905-6, and every day he opened the newspaper and saw on the first page notices of death sentences carried out. Sometimes, unable to bear his horror alone, he would come to the drawing-room with a newspaper in his hand.

"Seven more death sentences! One cannot live and know that this is going on! We must cry out—shout!"

Little by little, material on executions began to come to him from all sides. Someone sent some photographs of execution by hanging. They were pasted between two sheets of paper and disguised on the outside by amateur photographs of unknown persons. Father kept them carefully secreted, either from fear of the censorship or to spare his family such shocking impressions. Many data were furnished him by the attorney Muraviov, who told him about cases of capital punishment from his experience as lawyer and revolutionary. Father spoke of nothing else. Two days before the visit of Muraviov he opened the newspaper *Rus* and read:

"Today, May 9, on the Strelbitsky field at Kherson, twenty peasants were executed by hanging for a bandit attack on the estate of a land-owner in the Elizavetgrad district."¹

It had been a long time since father had worked as he began working now. From the day he started to compose "I Cannot Be Silent," we felt that something mighty was coming from his pen. He was transfigured, more cheerful and self-assured—like a man who has abandoned passive observation and taken up the struggle. He wrote every day, with big, broad strokes of the pen as he used to write his *belles-lettres* compositions, and he did not draw a free breath until

¹. Gusev, *Two Years with Tolstoy*.

the last dot was put down and the manuscript was sent to Chertkov at Petrograd for distribution.

He hurried Vladimir Grigorievich with the publication. "I Cannot Be Silent" appeared abroad in many languages at once. But in Russia it was printed in full only in forbidden, underground publications. The newspapers published excerpts and for that had to suffer severely: the *Russkia Vedomosti*² was fined 3,000 rubles; the editors of some other papers were imprisoned.

The article produced an uproar and was talked of everywhere. Father's correspondence grew enormously. Most of the letters expressed admiration for the article, but there were also abusive references. Then one day we received by mail a parcel: a small, neat box and in it a stout rope not quite the thickness of a finger. At first we did not understand what it meant, but when we read the letter that accompanied the parcel, we were horrified.

"Count," wrote a woman frantic with hate, "this is an answer to your article—without troubling the Government you may do it yourself, it isn't difficult. Thereby you will do good to our country and our youth. A Russian mother."³

Father was deeply grieved.

"It is hard to cause such enmity in people!" he said and wrote to the sender of the rope:

I much regret that, certainly without wishing it, I have caused you to have such feelings—probably painful also to yourself—as are expressed in your letter. You would gratify me profoundly if you explained to me the cause of your unkind feeling and tried to extinguish it in yourself. I fear that you will take these for empty words, but I am sending them to you in all sincerity.

Compassionately yours,
LEV TOLSTOY⁴

Father's eightieth birthday drew near. The article "I Cannot Be Silent" had made his popularity still greater, and many people wished

2. Moscow liberal daily.

3. The message clearly referred to this passage in the article "I Cannot Be Silent": "And that is why I am writing, and shall by every means in my power spread what I write, both in Russia and abroad: that either these loathsome, inhuman deeds may end, or I may end; and that they may put me in a stone hole where I can feel that I cannot do anything; or, best of all (so good indeed that I dare not even dream of such happiness) they may put a shroud and a hood on me—the twenty-first or the twenty-one thousandth man—and push me also off the bench so that with my weight I may tighten the noose on my old neck."

4. Biriukov, *Biography*, Vol. IV.

to celebrate the day. Some thought, in their simplicity, that it would be a satisfaction to Tolstoy; others wanted an opportunity for personal publicity and attracting public attention to themselves; correspondents and photographers welcomed a chance to earn something. As for the Government, it tried in every way to hamper the celebrations. Father was indifferent to all of this activity, but it weighed on him. His health had given way again lately, fainting spells recurred several times during the winter. No illness of his alarmed me as much as did these spells, when for several minutes, sometimes for entire hours, he would lose his memory and talk incoherently. He would look into space with wide open eyes; his speech was firm, but all facts were confused in his mind. I noticed that every one of these fainting spells followed some strong emotional shock he had had.

"Annochka?" he would ask us, "has she come?"

"But papa, she has been with us for three days already!"

"Is that so?"

He evidently tried to remember the circumstances; and, from the effort and the disagreeable realization that all was not well with him, he became still more confused and forgetful. It broke my heart to see him in that condition.

That summer, he fell ill again. A red spot appeared on one leg. At first he paid no attention to it, but it became redder, the veins swelled, dark spots appeared. Dushan Petrovich was frightened. "Dangerous—very dangerous!" he said. "At his age this may cause a cardiac complication at any time." Professor Martynov and Dmitri Vasilievich Nikitin were called from Moscow. Although father obediently allowed himself to be examined, he was displeased at having the doctors called. "What do they know about it?" he said.

The doctors confirmed the diagnosis of Dushan Petrovich: thrombosis of the veins. They prescribed complete rest and ice on the affected leg. From his bed, under the foot of which wooden blocks were placed to raise his legs, father changed only to his "Crimea wheel chair" in which he was wheeled about the rooms. He dictated to Gusev, wrote in his diary, and prepared for death.

How pitiful, obtrusive, senseless, all the commotion about a jubilee seemed to him. "All my life I've hated all kinds of jubilees," he said. "It seems like a mockery that in my old age, when I must think of death, people want to do such an unpleasant thing to me!"

There were people, of course, who reproached father for celebrating his jubilee. Old Mme Dondukova-Korsakova, an acquaintance, wrote a long letter to mother, speaking of the offense which every

loyal member of the Orthodox Church would feel if people celebrated the jubilee of a man who had renounced the church. Father read the letter and resolved to do all in his power to stop the celebration.

He wrote to Mme Dondukova-Korsakova:

DEAR MARIA MIKHAILOVNA!

I should say, sister in spirit, if I only knew that you would permit me to call you that. I have just read your letter to my wife, and it has moved me deeply. You have revealed to me what I, in my light-mindedness and egoism, had not thought of; and what you thus revealed to me is very important. These jubilee praises under preparation are to me—I shall not say highly painful—they are highly tormenting. I am so old, so near death, at times I so wish to go to the One from whom I came, that all these vain, pitiful utterances are most difficult to bear.

At the same time he wrote to Stakhovich, one of the organizers of the "Committee of Initiative": "Here is my great plea to you—do what you can to cancel the jubilee and set me free. I shall forever be very, very thankful to you."⁵

Stakhovich tried to fulfil father's request, but it was already impossible to stop the celebration. The precursors of every memorable event—the photographers—began to make their appearance at our house. I remember father sitting, exhausted, on the porch with his ailing leg stretched out, and mother coming in to ask him to consent to being photographed for the moving pictures. He made a grimace of pain and started to refuse, but the camera men swore that they were not going to disturb him and would not ask him to pose. They tried to photograph him from the lawn and from the verandah, while father sat motionless, looking before him with a melancholy stare.

On August 28—his birthday—he worked in the morning as usual over his *Cycle of Reading*. He was still quite weak, although his leg was getting better and he even tried to stand on it. He felt ill at ease and embarrassed. Only his illness prevented him from going to Tania's at Kochety for the day.

The commotion began in the early morning: visitors arrived from Kozlovka station; troikas drove up to the steps again and again, sounding their little bells; quantities of mail and telegrams were brought in from the post office. The young boys on the verandah sorted the booklets published by the *Posrednik*. My brothers, as always cheerful and sure of themselves, read the telegrams of greeting, smoked, and examined the gifts. I went to the village to distribute among the peasant

children the candy sent by George Bohrman, the candy manufacturer, with father's portrait on the boxes and wrappers. Moving picture cameras clicked.

The gifts were many. In the big drawing-room, on the grand piano, stood a handsome samovar with a towel thrown across it on which were embroidered the titles of Tolstoy's stories for the people: "God Sees the Truth But Is Slow to Tell It," "Allow Headway to the Fire And You'll Never Put It Out," and others. These were sent by the waiters of the restaurant "Fars" in Petrograd, accompanied by a touching address. Nearby lay a wonderful album from Russian artists with original paintings by Repin, Pasternak, Levitan, and others. From France, came twenty bottles of San Rafael wine, "the best friend of the stomach." One manufacturer sent a case of cigarettes with Tolstoy's picture on the packages! This gift was returned with father's letter on the harm of smoking.

Especially interesting was an address from conspicuous Englishmen and Americans, brought by Mr. Hagberg Wright.⁶ Among the signers were Edward Carpenter, H. G. Wells, George Kennan, Donald M. Wallace, and Bernard Shaw. There were letters from France, Germany, even from Australia, and about seventeen hundred telegrams.

"For over half a century," wrote the professors of the Petrograd Polytechnic Institute, "you have amazed the world by the artistic works of your genius, and the breadth and daring of your opinions. Your mighty word creates untold good, awakening our moral feeling, spurring our conscience and inspiring our thought. Your life is an inspired seeking for justice, truth, and the roads to humanity's happiness. To you, the pride of our country, we send our fervent well-wishes. Live long, that the power of darkness may be combated."

"God grant that your life may last long, great sower of love and justice. Peasant Wheelwrights."

"To a seeker of God, a Catholic priest sends his greeting."

"For your ardent protest against capital punishment, receive our respectful homage to the genius, the knower of Russia's heart," wrote a group of teachers.⁷

The principal feelings which the greetings expressed were gratitude for purifying religion and resistance to violence, in particular, capital punishment; gratitude on behalf of the working people, and for efforts to emancipate the soil—his propaganda for Henry George's theory; and for his artistic creations.

6. A friend of V. G. Chertkov—translator of father's books.

7. Biriukov, *Biography*, Vol. IV.

Father could not possibly remain indifferent to this flood of sympathy, admiration, and love. Several times during that day tears came to his eyes. To many of the communications, he replied personally; he also wrote a letter to the newspapers which said:

I thank cordially all who have greeted me, and especially those (and they were a majority of all those who addressed me) who quite unexpectedly and to my great joy, expressed in their messages their full agreement, not with me, but with those eternal truths which I endeavored, as well as I could, to express in my writings. Among these persons—this was especially gratifying to me—most were peasants and workers.⁸

There were many people at dinner, and a hubbub of voices and tinkling of glass and silver. After the roast, servants carried around champagne bottles wrapped in napkins. Corks exploded and goblets were raised for toasts. Father sat at a separate table with his leg stretched out. He looked tired and ill. Everyone came to him to touch glasses. As usual on such occasions, he felt uneasy.

"My dear Lev Nikolayevich!" Maria Alexandrovna exclaimed with deep feeling, touching father's glass with her glass of water and grasping his hand. Father smiled at her lovingly.

During the dinner my brother-in-law, M. S. Sukhotin, and Mikhail Alexandrovich Stakhovich arrived in a troika with magnificent horses. In his soft, slightly nasal baritone, Stakhovich said something pleasant to every one. The straight and correct Englishman Wright smiled calmly; my brothers teased Dushan Petrovich. And after dinner "the dark ones" surrounded father, sat down and looked at him, waiting for words to fall from his mouth. But he was tired and preferred a game of chess. And later, like a deliverance, came music—Goldenweiser played Chopin.

I hardly saw father at all on that day and only went into his room for a minute before retiring. "Well, Sasha, how is everything?" He met me with his usual phrase, not so much a question as a greeting. I did not answer but looked him in the eye, trying to see what he was thinking.

"Depressing!" he said.

"What—the fuss—the people?"

"Yes—rather the people. It's chiefly that there is so much insincerity and falseness. Take X. He seems to be friendly toward me, yet I never feel that I can speak with him simply, it's always so difficult. The other day, for some reason, he told me about the trouble between him

and his wife; and today, he kissed my hand, I don't know why. Well, but I mustn't, I mustn't judge," he interrupted himself. "The Lord be with him."

So the day passed. It seems to me that in that celebration only one man had really understood what father's soul was thirsting for.

On March 12, Gusev received a letter from Bodiansky, who had been in prison for distributing father's writings.

. . . I wrote my opinion as to how Lev Nikolayevich's jubilee should be celebrated. But the newspapers refused to print it. I wrote that in accordance with the existing laws and consequently with what is accepted as justice, Lev Nikolayevich should be put in prison on the day of his jubilee, which would have given him profound moral satisfaction. This thought I somewhat developed and enforced with arguments.⁹

Father was deeply moved by this letter and at once replied to Bodiansky: "Yes, indeed, nothing would have satisfied me so well and would have given me such joy as being put into prison, into a real, good, stinking prison—cold, hungry."

9. Gusev, *Two Years with Tolstoy*.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CONGRESS OF PEACE

MOTHER was becoming impossibly nervous—she could not keep her seat quietly, could not listen to conversation or concentrate on a book. She was in a hurry when there was no occasion for it; she seemed to feel that her whole life was one series of unsurmountable difficulties, of cares that surpassed her strength, yet she alone created these cares for herself. She had a panicky fear of poverty, although our family was more than sufficiently provided for. She said that she was worn out with taking care of father, yet jealously stood in the way of anyone else who wanted to stay at his bedside when he was not well.

We usually had lunch at twelve o'clock, which was the first meal mother took. With a rustle of silk petticoats, she entered the dining-room. All got up and greeted her. "Avdotia Vasilievna, coffee for the countess," the waiter called. Nervously tapping her heel against the floor and bending low over her cup, she loudly sipped the coffee from the spoon and pinched off pieces of bread and butter with Swiss cheese. Her head trembled.

Sometimes the conversation was about one of father's articles. "Nothing good in that article," mother remarked. "A Christian cannot write so—abuse the Government, call it a robbers' lair."

"Yes, but he also accuses the revolutionaries."

"Don't you really see that, after all, Lev Nikolayevich always justifies them?"

"And the revolutionaries say that he justifies the Government!" I tried to intervene.

Sometimes I listened to mother calmly, sometimes I felt terribly irritated; but never to anyone, not even to myself, did I want to confess this.

We all sit in the drawing-room and talk. Mother steadily taps the floor with her French-heeled slipper, and there is so much restlessness in this knocking that it seems to resound in my chest. My heart begins to beat violently—I cannot stand the sound any more and leave the room. But soon I feel ashamed. "What lack of self-control!" I tell myself, "how silly!" And with a firm resolve to take myself in hand, I return to the hall.

Father plays chess with Mikhail Sergeyevich, the others talk with animation.

"X says I look only fifty," mother is saying. "But then nobody ever takes me for more. It's my cares that torment me, otherwise I would look still younger. A terrible amount of annoyances! Here I've called in the Government guards, and they have started immorality on the estate—" The heel keeps tapping the floor. I make an effort to control the nasty little tremor I feel in my chest, but do not succeed. The knocking echoes in my heart, beats in my head; I make a tremendous effort to calm myself. "It's all very well for Lev Nikolayevich," mother continues, "he has waved everything aside, he lives quietly—" I am trying not to listen to mother, not to look at her, but in spite of me my eyes become riveted on her, on the little foot in a graceful slipper with a French heel.

"Well, how about a *revanche*, Lev Nikolayevich? Shall I give it to you tonight, or will it be for tomorrow?" Mikhail Sergeyevich asks father with a contented air, sinking back in his armchair.

"We'd better have it tomorrow," father says in a tired voice. He rises and goes to his rooms.

"Does he feel it so much, too?" I think. "And yet how much more patient he is, how much more self-contained!" I go to my work in the Remington room, and the feeling of bitterness and irritation familiar from childhood—a bitterness rising from lack of love for my mother—gnaws painfully at the pit of my stomach. Shame torments me, I sleep poorly and on the next day go to find mother. After lunch she usually busies herself with photographs. Chemical baths stand on the window sill, on the chairs around the little locker. Mercilessly bathing her already green fingers in the photographic fluids, she takes out the photographs and shows them to me. She needs praise, like a child, and I praise her pictures to please her.

"Mother, let's go for mushrooms!"

"All right," she answers, "though they say there are few this summer!"

"Never mind, I know some places."

"Very well, just wait till I put the last pictures into the water."

We wait till all the photographs change their reddish color to gray. Mother impatiently turns them over, rocks the chemical baths, keeps taking out the pictures and putting them back without knowing why she does it. At last, all the photographs are safely floating in the water bath, the fluids are poured into their blackened bottles and mother goes to her bedroom. She hooks up her long full skirt for walking,

takes from a shelf a little basket darkened with time—one that she has preserved since Vanichka was alive—and we go to the woods. Mother is not comfortable on her French heels, she stumbles, and I feel afraid that she may sprain her ankles. She cannot see the mushrooms very well on account of her nearsightedness; I help her find the places where they grow. We are both in a softened mood, and the painful impression gradually leaves me.

In the summer of 1909, brother Liova stayed with us. I often had the same feeling toward him that I had toward mother, only I did not suffer from it so. He had a very uneven character. I never saw in anyone else such abrupt changes from kindness to cruelty, from hope to complete despair. We did not quarrel, but I could not feel kindly toward him when he was rude to father. At such times it looked as though an evil spirit possessed him. He tormented himself and others. "Nothing can be worse than being the son of a great man," he used to say. "Whatever you do, people compare you with your father." When Liova came to Yasnaia Poliana, mother was happy; although they quarreled sometimes, they understood each other perfectly. But father had a hard time with Liova. Arguments about the necessity of prisons and capital punishment would irritate father. "Help me, Lord, help me," he would whisper, and sometimes he would say to me after an argument, "Eh, I didn't hold out with Liova, I didn't do my shame!" The wealth and fame which were a burden to father in his last years were objects of envy to Liova. He did not understand the great, and, as he thought, undeserved fame of his father.

In June, 1909, father received an invitation to the Stockholm World Congress of Peace and decided that he would go. "I am obliged to go," he said, "to make use of my name and say the things which, perhaps, no one else will undertake to say." He began to prepare for the journey and to write an article on peace. But quite unexpectedly his decision aroused a tempestuous protest from mother. She wept and threatened to poison herself if he went to Stockholm. She did not sleep nights, refused food, said that she would starve herself. Finally, she developed neuralgia in one shoulder, which made her scream with pain. Father often went into her room and tried to calm her, talking to her affectionately.

"Tell me, promise me that you are not going!" she pleaded. "Liovochka, dearest, what does it cost you to promise?"

"Understand, Sonia, I cannot. I consider it my duty."

"A-a-a-h!" she screamed, "you want to kill me! You are cruel, you have no pity!"

"Well, calm yourself, please calm yourself. We'll see about it."

"So you promise, do you? You are not going?"

"We'll see about it later. Be calm," father tried to quiet her.

"Now remember, remember, you have promised me, Liovochka darling," mother said.

"Enough, enough," and father left her room with tears in his eyes, glad that she was at least a little bit calmer.

It soon became evident that father's project of going to Stockholm was not the chief reason for mother's nervous attack.

The Denisenko family were staying with us just then: my first cousin Lenochka, daughter of Aunt Maria Nikolayevna; her husband Ivan Vasilievich, who was at that time presiding judge at Novocherkask; and their two children. Against their will, they were drawn into the family quarrel. Ivan Vasilievich, good natured, correct, disinclined to quarrel with anyone, with rosy cheeks and a small, faultlessly parted and brushed graying beard, was entirely knocked out of his equanimity.

"Imagine," he said to me one day, puffing and wiping his face as if after a great exertion. "Your mother called me today and showed me the power of attorney she has. She asked my opinion whether she was able, on the strength of that document, to sell your father's works."

"What do you mean—sell? Without his consent?"

"Why, yes. I told her it was impossible. 'And how about prosecuting others in court on the ground of this paper?' I was revolted. 'Are you really going to prosecute people for publishing his works, knowing that Lev Nikolayevich would be against such an action?' 'Yes,' she said, 'my rights are constantly being infringed upon. People publish the works written before 1880, his *A B C*, his children's readers. Tell me, can I, on the basis of this power of attorney, complain to the court?' I told her no. She was much upset by that and decided to speak to Lev Nikolayevich. But for heaven's sake," Ivan Vasilievich said to me, "don't give me away. Your mother warned me that nobody knew anything about this paper she has; and that everybody is persuaded that she has the copyright for his works until the year 1884."

Brother Mikhail came to Yasnaia Poliana about that time.

"But this is awful!" Ivan Vasilievich exclaimed to me several days after Misha's arrival, ruffling his gray hair in despair and protruding his lips with emphasis. "Misha has just asked me whether it is possible, during his father's lifetime, to sell his works. Well, begging your pardon, I have given him what was coming to him. He knows the will of Lev Nikolayevich perfectly well! It's revolting, revolting!"



View on the estate of the Tolstoys at Yasnaia Poliana



Countess Tolstoy

Mother again went to father with a request to grant her the right or at least give her a power of attorney for prosecuting people who published his works without permission. Father resolutely refused.

On July 12, he wrote in his diary: "Last night I felt bad on account of conversations with Sofia Andreyevna about the publishing and prosecuting in court. If she only knew and understood how she alone poisons my last hours, days, months of life. I don't know how to tell her and have no hope that any words whatsoever would be effective."

Our household was gloomy; the children were the only ones who were glad to be alive. The little Denisenko girl and boy were very pretty, and the boy, Onisim, at times reminded me of Vanichka. Thoughtful and kindly, he was as timid as a girl, and often blushed, which made him still more attractive. His handsome mouth, like that of a Greek statue, went askew, the big blue eyes looked up in embarrassment. Father liked him and often took him for a walk or ride, talking with the boy earnestly and trying to awaken his interest in moral questions. This was not difficult, for Onisim was sensitive to all that was good. How well they looked when riding horseback together! Father's gray beard waved in the wind, he sat smartly and surely on old but still spirited Délire; and beside him rode Onisim in white shirt and short trousers, hatless, with blond curls and a beaming face. He was elated: he was riding horseback with grandfather, and a real, honest-to-goodness horse was under him. The animal was to him an extraordinary being combining all the horse virtues that ever existed. They were going far—very far—into the dreaming forest of Zaseka, and grandfather was going to talk with him as if he were grown up.

In spite of the strained atmosphere in the house, father did not cease to think about the Peace Congress. One evening, when we were all assembled in the big hall, he said, "The point is this: all these gentlemen consider it useful to converse about peace as long as the question of abolishing all obligatory military service is not raised. Peace—very fine! Still, every country must defend itself and for this purpose must keep an army. What I want to tell them is—"

"What—Liovochka? Are you going there? You promised me—"

"Wait, Sonia, let me finish!"

Mother jumped up and ran to her room. Father, with a visible effort, finished his thought. The conversation died down, and, sighing softly, he left the room. Fifteen minutes later, passing by mother's bedroom, I heard loud and excited voices.

"Of course you don't care! Do you ever pay any attention to my sufferings? You want fame, popularity! But you promised me!"

"Enough, enough, Sonia, when did I promise you that?"

"You lie, you lie again! You promised me the other day that you would not go! Ah, your falseness, your cruelty have no limits!"

I went away, but for a long time I heard the sound of mother's hysterical screams and father's even, pleading voice. I do not remember how long this argument continued. There were days and nights when father had hardly any sleep and food. He became thinner, his face looked drawn.

Poor Ivan Vasilievich Denisenko did not have much of a rest this time at Yasnaia Poliana. First one, and then another, bothered him for legal advice.

"You know, Sasha," father said to me after Denisenko had left. "I did not think I would tell you, but I asked Ivan Vasilievich to write me a will. I wish to make the rights to my works common property after my death. And imagine, my mind must have been eclipsed. I was going to give the land to the peasants! I had forgotten that I gave it to the family long ago."

On July 21, 1909, father wrote in his diary:

I could not sleep until two o'clock, and even later. Woke up feeling weak—somebody awakened me. S. A. did not sleep all night. I went to her. It was maddening—.

I am tired, I cannot stand it any more, I feel altogether ill. I feel unable to face it reasonably and lovingly, entirely unable. For the time being, all I wish is to retire and take no part in anything. I cannot do anything else—otherwise I had already thought of running away. Well, now show your Christianity—*c'est le moment, ou jamais!* And yet I wish so much to go away! I doubt that my presence here is necessary to anyone in anything. A hard sacrifice and harmful to all. Help me, God, teach me. One thing I want—to do Thy will and not mine.

July 22. Yesterday ate nothing and could not sleep. As usual, the day was very hard. I feel sad now, too, but touched and clear. Yes, to love those who do evil to us, so you say—well, try it out. I make an effort but a poor one. Am thinking more and more of going away and leaving instructions about my property.

But the time had not yet come. Father was not yet fully convinced that his "hard sacrifice" was "harmful to all." After one stormy scene, during which mother tortured father and herself to the limit, father promised her that he would not go to Stockholm.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE TRIP TO KREKSHINO

ON September 3, 1909, father, Dushan Petrovich, Ilya Vasilievich, and I went to visit the Chertkovs at the estate of their relatives, the Pashkov family, at Kreckshino. Father wanted to see Vladimir Grigorievich and to rest awhile from the life at Yasnaia Poliana. But people dogged his every step. Several days before our departure, a moving picture company requested permission to photograph his departure from Yasnaia Poliana. Mother liked being photographed and made no objections, but for father it was annoying.

"What for?" he said. "It's so disagreeable, so embarrassing! Couldn't we arrange it so that they would not come?"

"Let's send them a telegram, very simply," I said. "Why should we have any compunctions about them?"

"That would not be right at all," mother argued. "Why should we hurt people's feelings? They will come and photograph, and it won't be any trouble whatever."

But Aunt Maria Nikolayevna, who was visiting us just then, supported father so energetically that mother had to give in. I sent a telegram in father's name asking them not to come. But to our amazement and indignation, on the eve of our departure, the camera men nevertheless made their appearance.

"You are asking my consent to be photographed," father said to them, making an effort to control his irritation. "I cannot give this consent. And if you do it without permission—"

"Our firm would never permit itself to do that!" one of the men replied.

Next morning, as we drove to the station, the photographers were waiting for us at the gates of the estate. We reached the station just ahead of them. The railroad gendarme forbade their photographing on the railway premises, but they telephoned to the authorities at Tula and received the necessary permit. Again their cameras buzzed.

Dima Chertkov was with us, going back to his home; Goldenweiser joined us at the Yasenki station. Our group grew like a snowball. People recognized father on the way and started conversation with him, and finally he had to seek refuge in a separate compartment.

At the Kursk terminal in Moscow, Chertkov, Gorbunov, and the newspaper correspondent Spiro were awaiting us. Squirming his way up to father, bowing with the utmost politeness and smirking, Spiro began to ask questions. Suddenly father turned to him and, without answering his questions, said abruptly:

"Tell Sytin¹ that what he is doing to me is terrible! I have no words to express my indignation!"

"Just what is the matter, Lev Nikolayevich?" Spiro asked, embarrassed.

"It is no way to act," father continued. "He took my 'Readings for Every Day' and promised to print it, and I've seen nothing of it to this day! The *Posrednik* would have had it out long ago!"

"Yes—but I am not—"

"No, tell him please," father continued with temper. "It's outrageous, outrageous."

We spent the night at our house in Moscow and the next day after lunch all of us—father, Gorbunov, Chertkov and his son, Goldenweiser, and I—went to Zimmerman's music store where the new player piano "Mignon" was demonstrated to father. I seldom saw him so worked up at the sight of a new invention as he was then. He listened to a few pieces of Chopin as played by Paderewski, waltzes of Straus played by Grünfeldt. "Marvelous, marvelous!" he exclaimed. "But explain to me how it is done. How can the keys move, how can the pedal work, how is it possible, in general, to reproduce the playing of an individual pianist? I understand how the phonograph can do it—"

Of Krekshino I remember a beautiful house built like an English cottage, a large English park, a pond—and a houseful of heterogeneous people. Neighboring peasants came and had tea, and father tried to start a conversation with them but obviously could not overcome a feeling of awkwardness. A collector of Russian songs came with her husband. A group of forty rural teachers discussed questions of pedagogy and religion for three hours. Musicians came: two brothers Mogilevsky, Sibor, a quartet, Goldenweiser. Zimmerman, on the very next day, sent down a "Mignon" to which father listened with especial delight.

As usual at the Chertkov house, everybody ate at one table: servants and masters together. Our Ilya Vasilievich was pitifully confused. He tried to find a seat at the farthest end so that nobody would

1. The publisher of the liberal newspaper *Russkoye Slovo*, for which Spiro was a correspondent.

notice him, blushed, ate very little, and every time one of us passed by, he tried to jump up. And when mother arrived, and, scrutinizing all those at table with her lorgnette, turned her eyes for a second on Ilya Vasilievich, he looked as though he would sink through the floor.

Here at Krekshino, which was close to Moscow, the confusion was perhaps even worse than at Yasnaia Poliana. In one respect only was it better here: the peasants of the surrounding villages did not see a "master" and a landowner in father, and he was able to talk with them simply, sometimes without even telling them who he was. Before his morning coffee, father went walking; and some hundred paces behind him, trying to be unnoticed, walked Vladimir Grigorievich, in high boots and with a long walking staff. In the daytime, father took a walk or rode on a large, old, gray horse. He was startled by the revolutionary temper of the peasant youth in that vicinity and by their general development which was much superior to our Yasnaia Poliana peasants.

"The prestige of the landowner is already undermined," he said. "If they still take off their caps, it is not from sincere respect; in their hearts they despise him. The old people, of course, stick to the old traditions."

One day father, Vladimir Grigorievich, and I rode to see a peasant craftsman who lived a few versts away. We found the peasant in his small wooden hut sitting at a woodworking lathe and turning those tiny wooden toys called *biriulki*.² When Chertkov explained to him why we had come and who father was, the man showed no signs of being glad, got up unwillingly and showed us his work. But gradually he was drawn into conversation. Father asked him how much he earned, where he sold his *biriulki*, whether he drank or smoked. It came out that agriculture yielded almost nothing in that locality, and the peasants made their living by wood crafts. Their wares sold pretty well. From the first room, the woodworker led us into a clean guest room, brought a little box, wiped it off with his sleeve, and handed it to father. Father gasped with admiration. It was a set of beautifully turned tiny *biriulki*—kitchen pots, scoops, mugs.

"But just how do you make them?" father asked.

2. Reproductions of various household articles made from some fragrant wood, not more than an inch and a half long and mostly smaller. They are used in a very simple game like jack straws, being gathered into a heap from which the players in turn pull out pieces, one at a time, with a little hook. One pulls as many times as one can without disturbing the rest; if one moves anything else in the heap, it is the next player's turn.

The craftsman showed us his tools and, as we watched him, manufactured a tiny saucer.

Presently mother came to Krekshino to join us. On her way, she had hurt one foot and now was complaining. It was plainly evident that she was in the same nervous state that she had been in lately at Yasnaia Poliana. The Chertkovs tried to do everything in their power to make her stay at Krekshino pleasant. On September seventeenth—her saint's day—they disregarded their own rule not to keep saints' days, and arranged a celebration for the two Sofias who were in the house: mother and little Sonichka, daughter of my brother Andrei. Anna Grigorievna baked pies and cakes, and a gala dinner was served.

The first days mother was quiet, listened with great delight to the playing of the "Mignon," and took walks with her grandchildren. But suddenly she insisted that father go home on the eighteenth and stay overnight in Moscow. Father had wanted to stay at Krekshino until the nineteenth and go directly to Yasnaia, foreseeing the excitement which his appearance in Moscow would cause. His objections, however, gave rise to a fit of hysteria; father, as always, gave in, and the visit to Moscow nearly cost him his life.

Chertkov and mother willingly informed everybody of the day of father's departure from Krekshino; and when we came to the railway station, moving-picture men and photographers were waiting in readiness and cameras clicked. At the Briansky terminal in Moscow a crowd gathered—it seemed to have suddenly sprung up from the ground. Wrenching ourselves free, we took a hackney coach and went to Khamovniki. Here again the house was full of guests: Chertkov, Gorbunov, Dunayev, Maklakov, Goldenweiser. Brother Sergei had come from his estate. Father was cheerful and in good spirits. In spite of the multitude of people, he had rested up at Krekshino. I believe it was Maklakov who suggested going to the theater.

"Why not?" said father. "I would like to go to the ballet."

Everybody was surprised. "Why to the ballet?"

"I have two followers who dance in the ballet, I should like very much to look at them."

But the Great Theater was closed for the summer. We went to a movie on the Arbat. The audience recognized father at once, whispered, and craned their necks. It was stuffy, and a stupid piece was on the screen.

"What a pity," father said, "the film might be one of the mightiest means of spreading knowledge and great ideas, and yet it only serves

to litter people's brains. And geography! How fine it would be to use the movies for the study of peoples and countries!"

We left the picture early and went home. The telephone rang all evening without respite, and the question was invariably:

"Would you kindly tell me when Tolstoy is going home?"

"Who is asking?"

"The women's college."

"I don't know. It has not been decided yet."

"Why do you answer them this way?" mother asked me. "Why don't you tell them when we are going?"

"Because I believe that these ovations must be avoided in some way or other. Apparently something is being prepared on a grand scale. Let us go today or tomorrow on a different train."

But I found no sympathy in anyone. I dreaded the next day, fearing that father's weakened heart would not stand the excitement.

Then I went to see the attorney Muraviov. While at Krekshino, father had made a formal will, which had been signed and witnessed, but was it legally valid? Muraviov read the paper over several times and shook his head dubiously.

"I cannot tell you anything definite at once, but my first impression is that this paper has no binding force. I do not see how it would be possible for anyone to bequeath his property to the public. I must think it over and look up the statutes. Leave the paper with me, I shall let you know."

The next morning, all the newspapers carried an exact notice of the train and hour of Tolstoy's departure. We drove to the station in a hired carriage. An old retired general standing at our gate took off his cap and bowed very low. Father returned the greeting, and tears glistened in his eyes. People lined the sides of the lane, and took off their hats at the sight of the carriage. At the Kursk terminal, the crowd filled the whole square. Our carriage was surrounded. Someone helped us out.

"Chain, chain, keep a chain!" voices from the crowd shouted. We were pressed on all sides. People shouted, waving their hats in the air. Before the entrance to the station, we were pressed harder, the chain was broken. On one side of father walked Maklakov; on the other a huge, broad-shouldered gendarme.

"For God's sake, keep the crowd off, protect him!" I cried, beside myself with fear. "He'll be choked!"

In the entrance, we were pressed so hard that my breath almost stopped. Then we came out of the worst of it, but the same thing was

repeated on the platform. People clung to posts and climbed to the roofs of the cars. I did not look at them, I was watching father. He was deathly pale and walked with insecure steps, arm in arm with mother. It seemed to me that he was whispering something to himself; his lower jaw was trembling. As the train left the platform he stood at the window and returned the people's greetings; then he lay down to rest a little. We soon noticed that his sleep had changed into an unconscious spell, and we thought that he was dying. At Yasniki, we left the train and drove home by carriage. Father did not regain consciousness. While Dushan Petrovich and I tried to undress him and put him to bed, he sat in an armchair, muttering incomprehensible words and begging us to leave him alone.

"Liovochka," mother insisted, "Liovochka, where are the keys?"

"I don't understand—what for?"

"The keys, the keys to the drawer where you have the manuscripts!"

"Mama, please let him be, don't make him strain his memory—please!"

"But I need the keys," she said excitedly, "he will die and all the manuscripts will be stolen!"

"Nobody will steal them, leave him please, I beg you!"

Dushan and I continued to undress him and nearly carried him to bed. We lowered his head and put hot water bags to it; Dushan Petrovich made a subcutaneous injection. It was late in the night when he regained consciousness.

CHAPTER XXIV

FATHER

GIVE me your hand." I hesitated, especially if my hands were not very clean. Father took them and examined them a long time on one side, then on the other.

"The middle finger is not straight," he murmured as if to himself.

"And what does that mean?" I asked. I knew that he believed the hands of a person a very important indicator of personality; I wished that he would say something, but he kept silent. I tried inconspicuously to bend under the middle finger that was not quite straight.

"When you wash your hands you must pull the skin around the nails back with the towel, then it will not grow over the finger nail." I found that funny. "What are you laughing at? I'm in earnest. It does not look handsome otherwise!"

"Take off your glasses! You can't be making such a monster out of yourself!" father would say sometimes. I obediently took off the glasses and sank into a sea of haze. "You look better this way," he said.

Sometimes, as I came into his room, he looked at me with a melancholy air and said, "My Lord, how homely you are! How homely!" I did not like to hear that and laughed artificially. Apparently he noticed it. "That's all right, don't let that trouble you, it is not important."

"It doesn't bother me," I answered, not quite sincerely, "if that means nobody will want to marry me, why, I don't intend to marry, anyway."

Every winter I arranged a skating pond with the village children. I brought thirty or forty pairs of skates from Moscow, cleaned the ice of snow, and the fun started. When father went for his horseback ride after lunch, I took his work, left it in my room, and went to the pond. The children tied skates to their boots and waited. I ran out upon the ice and threw my muff so that it slid far away upon the smooth surface.

"Catch it, kids!"

And the whole gang chased the muff. Sometimes the one who caught it could not keep his balance and fell, and the rest collided and fell on top of him. Laughter, screaming, gayety. And occasionally in

the evenings we made caves in the snow walls that had gradually formed around the skating yard and placed burning candles in each. They shed a soft yellow light on the ice and snow. "Eh, what a beautiful 'lumination'!" the youngsters would say.

Returning from his ride, father came down to the pond and watched us play. One day I took his diary and read: "I went to the skating pond and feasted my eyes on Sasha. When you copy this remember, however, that what I want is to feast my eyes on as much spiritual energy in you. December 3, 1909."

Father liked real, whole-hearted merriment. He often said: "I fear three things: that Andriusha should divorce Katia (his second wife), that Maria Alexandrovna should die, and that Sasha should stop laughing!"

Sometimes when Annochka and I were in the midst of singing to the accompaniment of our guitars, forgetting the world, the door of my room opened. If it was mother or Chertkov, we were confused and stopped our music. But if father came in, we paused only long enough to ask him if he wanted something.

"No, no, I only dropped in to listen a while. Well, Annochka, go on, you are doing very well!"

Under yonder apple tree,
Under the curly green one,
Under the curly, under the green,
Sits a fine bright lad—¹

Father laughed and stamped his foot to the measure of the song.

Sometimes he looked at me long and steadily. Somehow I shrivelled under this gaze.

"What is it, little papa?"

"You're too fat. You must work—do physical work!"

I knew it and tried to move as much as possible, split firewood, shovel snow—but my real work compelled a sedentary mode of life, and this exercise did not suffice.

Father paid great attention to my reading. When I was fifteen I asked mother to give me *War and Peace* to read.

"Oh, no, no," father said. "She should not read it before she is seventeen."

I was about twenty-two or twenty-three when once he asked me what the book in my hands was.

1. Folk song.

"Artsybashev's *Sanin*," I answered.

"Ah, leave it alone! Please leave it," he entreated, in a pleading voice. "It is such filthy stuff!"

"You are right, from the very first page in it a brother looks in some strange way—"

"Oh, Lord!" father groaned, evidently remembering the contents of the book. "And why did you pick up this book? It's only littering your mind."

"All right, I won't read it, I won't!" And for a while after this conversation I still heard him groan and sigh in his study.

When Kuprin's *Yama* (*The Gutter*) was received at the house, and everybody read it, father said to me:

"Sasha, I have something to ask of you: Please, don't read *Yama*, it is a very gruesome thing. I don't even understand why Kuprin describes all this horror!"

During father's last years, my life became entirely concentrated in him. I found it hard to leave him even for a few days, and every morning I waited impatiently for him to get up so that I could ask him how he had slept and how he felt. In the evening, when saying good night to him, I took his hand to kiss—a large, handsome hand, with clean ribbed nails.

But in spite of my attachment for him, I often displeased him. I had my own money and often spent it recklessly; and although he never spoke with me on the subject, I knew that it was distasteful to him. It pained him to know that I had bought land without knowing exactly what I wanted it for and that I kept horses.

Horses were one of the chief fascinations in my life. I was continually buying, selling, training them. They ran away with me, threw me out of vehicles. I spent all my spare time in the saddle, in the buggy, or in the stable. "To no purpose," father would say, shaking his head reproachfully, "to no purpose."

In the winter of 1909-10, sister Tania, with little Tanichka and Dorik, stayed at Yasnaia Poliana. Her stepdaughter Natasha married Kolia Obolensky, widower of my sister Masha. That winter Dorik fell ill with measles. He was in bed in the room adjacent to the Remington room, and I often called on him. He had a light case and was beginning to get well when I felt sick. I had a bad headache, my eyes smarted, my whole body ached. Tania was frightened on account of Tanichka, the house was disinfected, and, for some reason, all the formalin odor seemed to have concentrated in my room. I felt worse

and began to suffocate. A doctor was called from Tula. I had a high fever. The doctor led me to the window, the better to examine the rash on my skin. A brisk draft came from the window cracks, I hardly managed to stay on my feet. My measles became complicated by pneumonia, and blood appeared in the sputum. Varvara Mikhailovna, who was staying with us again, took care of me day and night.

One night I felt particularly ill. Varvara Mikhailovna called Dushan Petrovich, and he decided to put a compress on my chest. He took a sheet, soaked it in cold water, wrung it out—not very hard—and with Varvara Mikhailovna's help raised me and put the cold sheet around me. Then he precipitately left the room.

"Wait, wait!" Varvara Mikhailovna cried after him. "Dushan Petrovich! where are you going? Help me fasten the compress on her!"

"I cannot!" Dushan Petrovich's reply came from the other room, with his Slovak accent on the first syllable of each word. "I cannot! I am too modest! Wrap her up yourself!"

Varvara Mikhailovna was in despair. I lay there on a cold, wet sheet, unable to turn, and she was not strong enough to lift me. She ran to wake the maid; as a result, the badly wrung compress wet my shirt and the bed clothes, and I began to shiver with cold.

I remember very little of what followed after that. I only knew that mother was in Moscow, and that Tanichka had also caught measles, despite the general disinfection. I hazily remember the coming of Doctor Nikitin. At some moments, I believed myself dying and lost consciousness, but, for some reason, I never had any fear of death.

One night I opened my eyes. The room was almost dark. "Drink!" I called. Suddenly, a figure got up from the divan and came near me and a feeling of great happiness surged over me. "Little papa—you?" With a trembling hand, he gave me a glass of water. The water did not all get into my mouth and trickled down my chin. With my lips, I tried to catch his dear hand. He sobbed softly and took my big, sinful, emaciated hand. I felt on it the touch of his beard and some teardrops. I was not a bit ashamed of his kissing my hand, although that had never happened before. But I could not understand why he was so upset. "Little papa, why are you crying?" I asked. "I feel so good, so good—" His sobs sounded louder, he rose and went back behind the partition. "Why are you crying?" I repeated my question. But the mental effort to understand was too hard, and consciousness again slipped from me.

During the worst days, when it was not certain whether or not I would live, father sat in my room and gave me water to drink, asking everyone else to leave. When life began to return to me, he often brought his work to my room. I felt happy, happy as at no other time in my life. He sat there, pouting, wrote, stopped, wrote again; and I feared to move or cough lest I disturb his train of thought.

When I was well enough to resume typing and answering letters, I learned that during my illness my work had been done by Bulgakov whom Chertkov had sent to help father. He had worked on the *Readings for Every Day*. But he soon went back to Teliatinki, as Varvara Mikhailovna and I could very well take care of the correspondence.

My measles were long gone, so was the pneumonia, yet I felt very weak, and my cough would not quite go. I tried to pay no attention to my symptoms but was always utterly tired out toward evening and liked to lie down on the sofa in the dining-room when I had a chance. Some nights I awoke sweating. Dushan Petrovich insisted that I take my temperature. It was 104.4°.

One evening after dinner when Varvara Mikhailovna and I were alone in the big hall, I lay on the sofa. I felt so weak that every movement caused sweat to break out all over me. Suddenly Dushan Petrovich walked in with quick steps.

"Alexandra Lvovna!" he said in a tone of resolve. "Alexandra Lvovna! Do not be frightened: you have consumption."

I looked at him in bewilderment. "What are you saying, Dushan Petrovich, what do you mean?" I asked him, thinking that it was a joke on his part.

"Never mind. Do not be excited. Varvara Mikhailovna and I sent your sputum to Tula for analysis and they found a great number of tubercle bacilli in it," said Dushan Petrovich, and suddenly broke into hysterical laughter.

Looking at him blankly, I myself could scarcely control a fit of either laughter or sobbing, I could not tell which. Finally, taking hold of myself, I left the laughing Dushan in the hall and went to father.

"I know!" he said, his head turned away as if to avoid my eyes. "I know, let us trust in God." He could not speak any more, and I too hardly controlled my tears. I hurried out of his room.

On the next day the doctor from Tula came. He and Dushan Petrovich tapped at my chest for a long time and finally agreed that there were active lesions in both lungs.

"You go to Crimea tomorrow," the Tula doctor said.

"I cannot—I am not going, doctor—can't you treat me here?"

"No. If you stay here, it will end badly. You need air, sunshine. In Crimea, you will get well in two months."

I packed up at once and was ready to go in two days. Father was in his study when I went to take leave of him.

"Goodbye, my darling," he said and wept.

I fell on my knees before him, kissing his hands.

"Enough, enough, dearest," he comforted me. "God willing, we'll soon see each other again."

I ran out of the room. Terror seized me as the thought ran through my mind: "What if I never see him again?" I returned to his room. He was sitting in the same position. Again I fell on my knees before him and seized his hands.

"Go, Sasha!" he said in a loud voice, almost gruffly.

In Crimea, Doctor Altschuler, who once treated father, greeted me with astonishment, looking at my fat figure and apparently healthy countenance.

"Why have you come to Crimea?" he asked.

"Examine me, they tell me I have tuberculosis."

"Impossible!" he said. But after his examination he changed to a more serious tone. "Do everything I tell you and in two months, with your constitution, you will eat up the tuberculosis instead of its eating you!"

Varvara Mikhailovna had accompanied me to Crimea. She knew stenography well, and I decided to lose no time in improving my shorthand, which I had neglected lately. "It will be a surprise to father," I thought. And I worked on it for several hours a day, writing down the words of every one I could hear: Varvara Mikhailovna who talked without respite, and the patients in the sanatorium who discussed their temperature, weight, and forced feeding. Shorthand gave me joy, it lent purpose and value to my stay in Crimea.

But one small circumstance threw me into despair: once as I was washing my hair, practically all of it came out in my hands. Bald spots appeared on my scalp. I had to cut my hair, and father hated the sight of short-haired women! "How shocked he will be when he sees me!" I thought. "Again he will be saying to me, 'How homely, how horned!'"

I did all I could to restore my health, fulfilled all of Altschuler's directions, even ate meat, which I had not eaten for years, and my strength returned little by little.

I received letters from father every day and wrote him daily.

I want to write to you, dear friend Sasha, but don't know what to write. I know that what you want mostly is to know everything about me, and yet it is not pleasant to write about oneself. Of how dear you are to me, being my sin of exclusive love, I should not write, but do it just the same, since I am thinking of it just now. My state of mind lately, especially on the day you left, was a struggle with a bilious physical condition. This condition is useful because it gives much material for working over oneself but is bad because it interferes with clear thinking and the expression of the thoughts to which I am used. This is the first day that I feel better, but I am writing nothing besides letters: to Shaw about the Society for Peace and to some others. G—— is busy with the booklets, which are ready for binding and which give me joy. Solomakhin was also here to-day;² he is a joy to me with his earnest religiousness. Why people are born and die in childhood, and why some live their lives in poverty and are cultured, and others live their lives in wealth and remain illiterate, and all the other apparent inequalities, I can explain. But the thing I am unable to explain is why some people, like Solomakhin for instance, are all aglow, so that their entire life is guided by their religion, while others are just like the spoon which never will understand the taste of the food in which it bathes every day.

Yesterday I went riding with Bulgakov and today with Dushan. Délire is quiet, the weather delightful, the violets Lenka³ brought, standing before me in a glass, now suffocate me. How is it there in Crimea? It seems to me I have read something about its being cold there just now. Write to me, you or Varia, every day.

L. T.

The last letter I received from father, dated May 17, was especially cheerful. I was already counting the days in anticipation of the time when I would be with him again and working for him.

. . . waiting for you all the time, joyously [father wrote]. But I would be very much chagrined if you came sooner than is good for your health. How cheerful I felt today from your gay letter! It will be good to be together again. But the chief good thing will be if we are ever so little better satisfied with ourselves, if we are a little less bad today than we were yesterday. Well, all right, all right, I won't bother you with my reasoning any more . . .

On May 27, 1910, I was back again with father. He passed his hand over my short, curly hair and said gayly, "And I had thought that you had a shaved head!"

2. Semen Mikhailovich Solomakhin, a peasant who shared father's ideas.

3. Alexei Sidorkov, son of Ilya Vasilievich Sidorkov.

CHAPTER XXV

THE DIARIES

AFTER my illness, I began to feel well and strong again. My heart was joyful. I was back at Yasnaia Poliana, helping father, and now I could take notes in shorthand. I was very much frightened at first; the thought that I would be unable to decipher my notes and that his words would be lost horrified me. I wrote slowly, trying to spell out all my shorthand signs, but father repeatedly expressed surprise at the speed of the work and could not get used to speaking without stopping. He would say something and wait, though I had it written down long before. "Amazing!" he would say. "Already written? It does not seem possible!"

After Crimea, Yasnaia seemed very beautiful, very much our own. Life assumed its accustomed course. The same work, visitors, outings, conversations, or reading aloud in the evening. The only thing that poisoned our joy was mother's disturbed mood. It was evident that the least pretext could throw her out of balance. Father was perpetually worried. One entry in his diary said:

"I returned home and found a Circassian guard who brought in Prokofi.¹ I felt terribly pained. I really wanted to leave the house. And now, this morning, the 5th, I do not believe it impossible. June 5, 1910."

Father decided to go to visit the Chertkovs, who were now at Meshcherskoye near Moscow. Dushan Petrovich, Bulgakov, and Ilya Vasilievich went with us. At Meshcherskoye, things were much simpler and cozier than at Krekshino. It may have been because there were fewer people around; but perhaps I simply saw everything in a rosy light. All were cordial and joked, and I did not notice so much the tedious sectarian-religious atmosphere customary in Chertkov's house.

Besides the Chertkovs, there were some young men in the house, all Tolstoyans. In the evening, we gathered in the dining-room. "Now, Valentin Feodorovich, sing us something!" father would suggest. Bulgakov possessed a strong tenor, untrained but agreeable. "Sing, sing some Russian song!" I accompanied and the gloomy young Tolstoyans joined in in chorus.

1. An old peasant from Yasnaia Poliana village.

It always seemed to me that there was something amiss in the Tolstoyans. They acted as though their Tolstoyanism imposed on them obligations of exterior holiness: wearing a plain blouse, refraining from laughter and any merriment. They seemed unable to understand that it is impossible to refuse joy, that joy not only is not sinful but is indispensable like air, like thinking, like food. Gradually, under the influence of the others' mood, their young faces too began to light up. And Bulgakov and I laughed prodigiously at the slightest pretext.

Chertkov cracked a joke once in a while, but always with such a serious mien that it was hard to tell at once whether he was joking or not. He wrinkled his arched nose, frowned, and only in his eyes a mischievous spark could sometimes be caught. Once at dinner, father and Vladimir Grigorievich were in an especially good humor.

"You know, I found a roach in my room," father suddenly declared.

"You don't mean it!" Chertkov exclaimed with horror. "A roach! Is it possible? One or several?"

"I don't know," father replied, still uncertain whether Chertkov was shocked in earnest or whether he was joking. "I believe there is only one."

"It should be caught and carried away," one of the young men remarked with a businesslike air.

"No, no! How can you say such a thing!" Chertkov exclaimed with a horrified expression. "If you catch one roach and take it away, Lev Nikolayevich may notice another one! It would be better for him to believe that there is only one roach in his room, and no more." And suddenly, the serious wrinkle near his nose loosened and Vladimir Grigorievich laughed without constraint.

Father often used to say that a man can be told by his laughter: that it makes a bad man look uglier and a good one more attractive. Laughter certainly was becoming to Chertkov. His face, usually stern and dictatorial, assumed a lovely, childlike expression, and he laughed loudly, from his very heart.

The only thing which I disliked at Meshcherskoye was the insane asylum located not far from the estate. Father was always interested in the insane and now he wished to use the opportunity to observe and speak with them. He went to the asylum occasionally and every time I saw him walking with a group of insane people, I was terrified. Some of the patients became extremely excited during these conversations, complained of the physicians, told father that they were not being cured and were being tortured. One, a teacher, made a particularly disagreeable impression on father. The doctors warned

him that she must never be contradicted in anything, but father forgot himself just once. She began to talk so excitedly and was so offended that he did not know how to get rid of her.

A couple of times father went to the moving pictures which were arranged for the patients. The hall was dark and some foolish melodrama was on the screen; father's white blouse and beard gleamed faintly in the darkness. I was conscious of the hall being filled with madmen and had a strong desire to get out as quickly as I could, but father calmly exchanged remarks with Chertkov and apparently it never occurred to him that there was anything to fear in the place.

I remember father saying repeatedly that insanity is egotism carried to its extreme: a person concentrates absolutely all his thoughts and interests on himself. "The more I look at them," he said, "the more I become convinced that, properly speaking, all people are abnormal; it is only a question of the degree. A truly religious man who has a foundation in life never can quite lose his mind."

One of the questions which he invariably asked the insane was, "Do you believe in God?"

"God is vicious," one of them replied. "If he were good he would not have permitted me to be tortured so."

"My God is science," one patient told him.

This visit at Meshcherskoye was the last pleasant period in father's life. He rested there; nothing tormented him but the thought of the impending return to Yasnaia Poliana. He even wrote two stories while there: "By Accident" and "Conversation with a Peasant." It had been long since he worked with such enthusiasm and rejoiced so over what he had written.

"Sasha," he called to me one morning, waving a manuscript in his hand, "listen:

Once a scribbler was inventing,
In the corner stood a trunk,
Busy scribbler could not see it
Stumbled and fell!

"Here, take this and copy!"

"Hurrah!" I cried, seizing the fresh manuscript. "This is something I'll never let you copy," I called out to Bulgakov and, carrying the manuscript, I climbed out the window and down a ladder that stood under it. This ladder was there to be used when Anna Konstantinovna Chertkova was resting, so as not to disturb her by walking up and down the stairs.

"Well, if you can do that—I can do it too," father said, making ready to climb out. "Do you think I'm any worse than you?"

"You can't," I called back to him as I climbed down. "It's not fitting at your age!"

"I'll climb just the same," he cried after me. But probably he felt ashamed at the last minute to do it in the presence of Ilya Vasilievich who was standing there, and he went downstairs in the usual way.

Our joyous mood was heightened by the news that Chertkov was again allowed by the Government to settle in Tula province. But—it is a true saying that there is usually much joy before a great sorrow. On June 22² at five o'clock in the afternoon, just as father was going to rest, I received a telegram: "Violent nervous attack, insomnia, weeping, pulse one hundred, asked me to telegraph you. Varia." When father awoke, I brought him the telegram. At first he was quite disturbed by it, but I called his attention to the words: "Asked me to telegraph." It was obvious that Varvara Mikhailovna had added these words to show that the situation was not very dangerous. This turned out to be true. Mother had written the telegram herself, and asked Varvara Mikhailovna to sign it for her. We conferred for a long time and finally decided to telegraph, asking her about the state of her health, to which the answer came this time in mother's own name: "I implore you to come on the 23d, quickly. Tolstaya."

But father could not leave on that day. He was waiting for the arrival of V. A. Molochnikov, a man who had recently been in prison on account of distributing father's works. Besides, we were expecting the violinist Erdenko. Assured that mother's sickness was not serious and that it was again the beginning of one of her fits of hysteria, father sent one more telegram, inquiring whether his coming was imperative. To this, he received an urgent telegram signed by Varvara Mikhailovna which said "I think it is necessary." This telegram, as we learned later, had been sent, like the preceding one, by my mother.

Father decided not to postpone our departure. We left for home on the same day at six o'clock. No trace was left of our exhilarated mood. In the railway coach, we were silent most of the time, each one thinking of what was awaiting us. At Tula father got out at the station to write and mail a note to Tania, but the people did not let him do it.

2. From June 17, 1910, until the end of father's life I kept an exact diary, sometimes noting words and phrases stenographically. I am using this diary as material in the present narrative of the events that followed. The publishing of the diary itself I consider as yet untimely.

Secondary school girls and boys, ladies and young girls crowded about him, asking for his autograph. First one approached him timidly, then another, and when father did as he was asked more came up and presently he was encircled in a tight human ring. The post-cards with his picture were soon sold out at the station bookshop and he was bombarded by postcards with landscapes, and even pictures of scantily dressed ladies to autograph. He refused to autograph the latter and walked back to his car. He was surrounded and barely managed to make his way to the train. When he entered the car several especially persistent young ladies broke in after him.

It was eleven o'clock at night when we got home. Mother was lying in bed and moaning loudly. There was something so exaggerated in these moans that I had to make an effort to greet her gently and ask about her condition. No sooner did father enter her room than the moans became an uninterrupted wail. "You have no pity," mother screamed at him, "you have a heart of stone, you love nobody but Chertkov. I shall kill myself, you will see, I shall take poison!" She reproached father for having stayed too long at Chertkov's. In a tender, trembling voice father begged her to calm herself, but the more he pleaded, the more she wailed. Involuntarily, I recalled the teacher at Meshcherskoye who complained to father against the cruelty of the doctors.

I tried to quiet mother. I reminded her of father's health, of how worn out he was from his journey, how curious people had tired him on the way.

"Yes," she cried hysterically, "he is above everything, above all, and I am not wanted anywhere! Anything is more important than I!"

"Go out," father told me in a low voice. "Go." I left the room. Several times the maid ran into my room. "Ah, go in there, Alexandra Lvovna, the Countess is tormenting the life out of the Count!" And so it lasted until four o'clock in the morning. But I did not dare to intrude.

Days of misery followed. Father knew no rest night or day. If mother quieted down, we knew that it was only a lull before a storm. The slightest pretext sufficed to call forth tears and reproaches. We were afraid to talk, to joke, to laugh; I was afraid to go into father's room.

One morning, as I was typing in the Remington room, mother suddenly ran in from the drawing-room, shrieking: "Who is there? Who is there?" She walked in an unnatural manner, with hesitating steps and breathing heavily. I went into the drawing-room. "Nobody is



Village of Yasnaia Poliana



Peasant cottage at Yasnaia Poliana

there," I said quietly. "Nobody. It only seemed so to you." Father came in. Mother fell to the floor. He said something to her. Wailing, she got up and ran through all the rooms. "Where is she going—where?" father exclaimed in horror. And father, Dushan Petrovich, and I ran after her. She was nowhere to be found. Finally father discovered her on the floor behind the bookcases of the library. She held a bottle of opium in her hand and cried, "One draught—only one!" She moved the bottle to and from her mouth but did not drink. I was about to snatch the bottle from her hands but a sudden loathing overcame me. "You know, mother," I said to her, "this is too difficult for us two, father and me. We are unable to cope with you. I shall telegraph to Seriozha and Tania that they must come. Let them, as the elders, do something to save father."

My words made an impression. Mother got to her feet, calmed down, and even asked for coffee. Five minutes later, when I was back at the typewriter, she came to me.

"For the Lord's sake, don't telegraph Seriozha and Tania. I am well, I won't do it any more—and if Seriozha and Tania come they will look at me with the same hating eyes that you do because I am tormenting father," she said in a childlike manner. I felt boundless pity for her and believed her when she promised to take herself in hand and stop tormenting herself, father, and us all.

A few days later, the same scene was repeated. It was toward six o'clock in the evening, the hour of father's rest. He could not sleep, being very upset, and rang the bell for me. Mother was again in the same excited condition. She had asked him where he kept his diaries and demanded that he give them to her. When he replied that they were in Chertkov's hands, she asked where Chertkov was keeping them. Father replied that he did not know. Mother began to accuse him of telling her lies and to demand that he surrender to her his latest diary.

"Let me read what you wrote there about me!"

Father gave it to her to read, and she saw the sentence: "Sonia is again very excited, and hysterical, decided to combat her with love." This made her terribly angry, she ran out of the house, walked in the garden for a solid hour in the pouring rain, came back thoroughly drenched and sat down to write in her own diary without changing her clothes.

I felt completely helpless. Something had to be done. Under my eyes, father's last strength was ebbing away, and I did not know what I could do. "Father has decided to combat her with love—I must fol-

low his example, I must treat her patiently, kindly, as a sick person," I was saying to myself.

Mother would not leave me alone, either. When, for any reason, she could not go to speak with father, she came to me. Every nerve in me vibrated when, tapping her heel against the floor, she would say, "Lev Nikolayevich has no heart, he loves nobody, he is cold as ice. When you were away in Crimea he was not in the least lonely without you, he was always so cheerful—" I entreated her to stop this talk.

"What does it mean—that he wants to combat me with love?" she continued, without paying attention to my words. "What is it he will combat? People will read his diaries, will say that I was an evil person! And what have I done to him?"

I did my best to calm her, to make it clear to her that she was wearing father out, that she was offended without cause. I told her how father thought of her while at Meshcherskoye, how he had rejoiced at seeing her again, how hard it had been on him to receive her insistent telegrams demanding that he come back, and how much harder it was for him to listen to undeserved reproaches. My pleading had no effect, and, with a sinking heart, I saw her run again to father's room. A few minutes later father and mother both came to the Remington room and father said, "Sasha, you know where my diaries are. Tell mother."

"I do not know."

"Ah!" mother screamed. "Ah! Chertkov has stolen them, has taken them away by trickery. Where are they, where?"

"I don't know, Sonia, this is really not important!"

"It's not important to me, but it is important to Chertkov, isn't it? Why is it less important to me, your wife, than to this devil Chertkov?"

"Because he has devoted his whole life to me, he is occupied with my works; because to me he is the nearest person of all." And father started to leave the room.

"Kill me! Give me opium!" mother screamed.

Father stopped. "Sonia," he said, his voice trembling, "I try in every way to be good to you. I have written in my diary that I want to combat you with love only, and yet you see something bad in these words, you condemn everyone and everything, and we two live altogether different lives!"

"But I suffer; I am in torment!"

"I am ready to beg you on my knees, and with tears, that you should

calm yourself." A sob cut his voice short. "I shall say nothing more to you, I shall not make a single reproach," he added, and went to his rooms.

"She must be ill," I thought as I went to bed that evening, again and again pondering over the situation.

Mother walked the lanes of the park for a long time and arrived at a new decision. If Lev Nikolayevich reproached her for living in luxury, then she was willing to go away with him and live in a plain peasant hut. But she would not let Chertkov be with him. Chertkov, she kept saying, was a devil who separated her and Lev Nikolayevich. She would have a priest come with holy water and have him hold a special prayer service to drive out the devilish spirit which Chertkov had instilled into Lev Nikolayevich.

How painful and incomprehensible these scenes were! I asked myself repeatedly what caused them. For one thing, mother seemed to feel an abnormal jealousy of Chertkov; then there was this desire to justify herself in the eyes of future generations, and her constant talk of intending to represent father and Chertkov in the worst light; and finally there was her worry about the financial side of the matter, the manuscripts, the publishing rights. My head swam. I could not cope alone with this tangle and begged father to summon Tania. We sent her an urgent telegram.

Chertkov was expected any day. Mother, much agitated, was trying to think of a place to take father so that Chertkov might not find him at Yasnaia Poliana. For a long time she kept urging a visit to my brother Sergei at Nikolskoye-Viazemskoye, and finally father agreed. Tania did not come, something detained her. On the evening of the 27th, Bulgakov came from Teliatinki and, not suspecting the effect that his words would produce, told us that Chertkov had arrived.

Mother at once began feverish preparations for leaving on that visit to my brother. I decided to go, too.

"You needn't go at all," mother tried to dissuade me. "Seriozha will not be in the least glad to see you, and there will be no horses for you at the station."

But I insisted. Nikolai Nikolayevich Gay, Jr., the son of Grandpa Gay, was at that time visiting at Yasnaia Poliana, and he went with me. It was a disagreeable journey. To begin with, it appeared that there was no room for me in the carriage. In the train, mother was dissatisfied with everything, complained that we paid too little attention to her; if we left the compartment, she said that we abandoned her like a dog.

While on the train, father called me and dictated to me this thought: "How strange that people are ashamed of their uncleanness, cowardice, low station; but not only are they not ashamed of anger, but rejoice at themselves when angry, incite themselves on, foment it, believing anger to be something good."

Since we did not think that horses would be sent for us two, Nikolai Nikolayevich Gay and I left the train one station earlier, where it was possible to hire a buggy. When we reached Seriozha's, we learned that he had not received our telegram and that mother and father were waiting at the station. Horses were sent after them at once, but they had to wait for five hours. Father did not find the time long. He ate some oatmeal which mother heated for him and went for a walk. On his way, he met a gang of railway hands and talked with them from twelve o'clock noon until half-past two.

While waiting for my parents at Nikolskoye, I told Tania and my brother's wife of what had been happening at home and asked them for help, saying that the two of us, father and I, were bearing a cross that seemed to be beyond our strength. Tania kept advising me to love and forgive mother. And then, for the first time, I told my sister of my difficult childhood and of how unbearably hard I found it to be with mother. Tania was twenty years my senior; she remembered mother as quite another person, young and serene.

When our parents came, Tania spoke for a long time with mother, but her persuasions did not do much good. Mother continued to justify herself in everything and condemn father and everybody else. Father was tired from the journey but still meek and patient with mother as before.

On the day before this trip, he had asked me to bring him the last story he had written where the heroine was painted in unflattering colors. He described her as an energetic brunette with black eyes. When he returned the story to me I noticed that the word "brunette" was crossed out and in its place was written "a blond with blue eyes."

"Lest mama should take it personally," he said.

As far as I can remember, he had written this story while visiting the Chertkovs at Meshcherskoye.

On July 27, father wrote in his diary: "Demented persons always secure their purpose better than sane people. And this is because they have no moral barriers: neither shame, nor truthfulness, nor conscience, nor even fear."

I had pinned many hopes on our trip to my brother's, thinking that

he and Tania would come to our aid. But presently we were going back to Yasnaia Poliana as helpless as before.

When father left the train at stations to take a little walk on the platform, mother followed him.

"No, no," she said, "I am right with you; I shall go out with you every time because I cannot tell if perhaps you will stay behind on purpose at some station!"

"Ah, Sonia," father replied with bitterness, "this is so embarrassing!"

"No, not at all, I shall only watch you—wherever you go, I go."

We reached Yasnaia Poliana about one o'clock at night, and it was two before father fell asleep. Mother walked into his room and waked him up. About five o'clock he fell asleep again. In the morning, she again awakened him.

"Mama, what are you doing?" I said to her after father had told me of this. "You will kill him!"

She became confused.

"Yes," she said, "I was very sorry myself. I hadn't thought he was asleep."

Mother retained a very painful impression of her visit with Tania. She feared a visit from Tania, talked of some dangerous gastric sickness prevailing in the Yasnaia Poliana village, and said that little Tanichka—sister's daughter—should not be brought here.

And so one day followed another. At first mother's demands and reproaches were indefinite but soon they were clearly formulated. Her first demand was that Lev Nikolayevich should give her his diaries; her second, that he should stop seeing Chertkov.

The question of the diaries was difficult. After signing, at Krekhino, a statement by which he made all his works common property, father noted this event in his diary, quite forgetting that mother might read it. Now, if she obtained the diaries, she would be far from comforted and would again give him no peace, demanding that he destroy that will. Chertkov and I were very much afraid that father would finally consent and give mother the diaries.

On July 2, as soon as father came to the lunch table, mother showed him a letter she had written to Chertkov requesting him to surrender the diaries to her. "Do it," the letter said, "so that Lev Nikolayevich can live in peace."

"Have I written well, Liovochka?"

"No, very badly."

"Why badly?"

"Because you are asking Chertkov to give you the diaries which I gave him of my own free will."

"Sasha," mother suddenly turned to me, "go out when father and I are having a serious conversation."

I went out. At six o'clock father rang for me. I entered.

"How do you feel?" I asked.

"Poorly, pressure in the chest, could not sleep. She will finish me! And besides, I'm worried because I promised to show her the diaries."

I could only gasp.

"Yes, I did; and now I don't know what to do. Probably I shall tell her that I made a mistake, that I cannot really do it, that there are some things which I do not want her to know. But just imagine what effect that will produce!"

I imagined that only too well. If father told mother that he had made a mistake in giving that promise to her, there would be such a storm as father would hardly be able to weather. If he showed her the diaries, she would read about the will—and the effect would be still worse!

In the evening, when Chertkov came, we had a conference as to what to do with the diaries. During the conversation, I thought I heard footsteps in the big hall. I went to the door and shut it tight. In a few minutes I heard rustling behind the door that led to the verandah. I hurried out. Her neck outstretched, leaning against the doorpost of the balcony, in her stocking feet—there stood mother. "I have heard everything!" she cried, as she ran away.

In another few minutes, she entered the room with quick steps. Her eyes glowed, her face was spotted red.

"Vladimir Grigorievich," she addressed Chertkov, "I have heard everything, I am very much upset, you are again plotting against me, I must have an explanation!"

"Sofia Andreyevna, I will repeat to you all that we have said," Vladimir Grigorievich replied serenely.

Father and I went out to the big hall. The voices of Chertkov and mother could be heard from the study, rising and falling. Father was upset, listened to the voices, rose in the midst of conversation, went to the study, came back again. All his thoughts were with the two who were talking there.

At last mother and Vladimir Grigorievich came out into the hall and Chertkov, taking leave of father, made ready to go at once. I went to see him out, in order to learn the results of their conversa-

tion. Chertkov had told mother frankly that the diaries were in his possession, as Lev Nikolayevich had requested him to work on them. And father confirmed this. Thereupon mother demanded that Chertkov should give her a written promise that he would return the diaries at her first request.

"I will, only not to you, Sofia Andreyevna, but to Lev Nikolayevich," Chertkov said, and sat down and wrote then and there a letter to this effect to father.

"And now let Lev Nikolayevich give me a written promise that he will give them to me," said mother.

But this father refused categorically.

"This is the only thing that was lacking!" he said. "That a husband should give written promises to his wife!"

Mother came and spoke with me for a very long time, accusing me of trying to separate her from father and reproaching me for betraying her presence when she listened behind the door. Thinking of father, I tried my best to keep down my irritation and to answer her calmly.

"You are my cross," she concluded. "Yes—Vanichka died, and you remained, to my sorrow."

My opinion of mother's true condition changed all the time. There were moments when I had no doubt as to her suffering from a mental affliction.

I had caught a cold and stayed in bed until one o'clock. Father came in, tender as always, asking about my health. Soon after he left, mother entered. She was very attentive, gave me advice. I was touched and thanked her. But our conversation turned upon Chertkov. Mother could not forgive him the words: "I have been your friend for many years, Sofia Andreyevna, and had I so wished I might have done nasty things to you and to your family, but I never did them." She twisted his words to mean that Chertkov intended to harm her, taking advantage of his high connections, and she talked at length of what a rude, repulsive person he was, asserting that of course he found it more advantageous to be "Tolstoy's friend" than to remain just a silly army officer. She said that she was writing her own memoirs which she would leave to the Tolstoy Museum so that none of the children—"as for instance yourself"—would be able to destroy them.

"But why should one want to destroy them—is there anything bad in them?" I asked. Mother did not reply but continued to abuse Chertkov and father until I asked her to stop.

That day after lunch father went to see Chertkov. Mother was greatly agitated, ran out into the yard time and again, sent a buggy after him, and was evidently angry at his going. When he came back, she began to upbraid him. I wanted to go out, but father took me by the hand and, every time I tried to go, he made me stay.

"You have forgotten everything, you fly to Chertkov's. You get wet in the rain, and I am worrying here!" mother screamed. "You are friendly with a man who intends to harm your wife! Tell him that if he wishes to come to our house he must apologize and give me the diaries!"

I tried to lead her away.

"You all want to kill me, you want me to have a stroke!" she exclaimed.

For a long time she kept at him, and finally, after he told her that he wished to go to sleep, she went out. I left after her, shutting the door tightly so that she could not so easily break in again. A few minutes later she ran into the Remington room.

"You want to kill me, I shall have a stroke right away!"

"You won't, but father will," said I. "If you continue like this, he will not live another month."

I could hardly speak from the sobs that choked me.

"And I—I am worn out, look how thin I've gotten!" she exclaimed.

"It's your own doing, no one tortures you, and you—what have you done to father? You have worn him out to the last!"

Mother left the room, but I had not yet regained my composure when she came in again.

"Sasha, you tell me that I am going to kill father—but his soul is already dead to me, and as to his body, I don't care."

"If you don't care, then we do; let Tania and the others see and know what you are doing to him!"

"It makes no difference to me what you all think!"

"Then you will have to find out that we care!" I screamed, beside myself. "We won't permit you to torture father to death!"

"You are powerless," she retorted and went out.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE WILL

AS he had suspected, attorney Muraviov found father's will invalid and said it would be necessary for father to will his rights to someone who would fulfil his wish by renouncing them. It was an unpleasant duty to remind father of this and let him once again torment himself with doubts. When Chertkov and I told him of Muraviov's verdict, he made no reply, and we, on our part, said no more about it, knowing that he was unceasingly thinking of it himself. And, indeed, in a few days, he informed Chertkov that he had decided to leave all his works to Sergei, Tania, and me, knowing that we would fulfil his wishes.

But one morning when I came into his study, he suddenly said, "You know, Sasha, I have decided to make the will in your name only," and he looked at me inquiringly. I was speechless. I thought of the immense responsibility thus laid upon me, of the family's attacks, of the offense to my brother and sister; and, at the same time, a feeling of pride and delight leaped up in my heart at his having trusted me with so great a task.

"Well, why don't you speak?" he asked.

I told him of my doubts.

"I have decided on it," he said firmly. "You are the only one who has stayed here with me, and it is quite natural that I should place you in charge of this matter. And in case of your death"—here he laughed gently—"your rights will be transferred to Tania."

"Perhaps it is better this way," I thought. "I shall settle matters quicker with Chertkov, as he still remains the chief publisher and editor of father's works."

On July 22, in the woods a few versts from the house, the will was signed. Sitting on a stump, father first copied it from beginning to end with his own hand. The witnesses, Radynsky, Chertkov's secretary Sergeyenko, and Goldenweiser, affixed their signatures after father's. I knew how difficult it was for father to come to this decision and what a trial it was to be unable to tell the family what he had done. But he had firmly decided to wipe out, if only after his death, the compromises which he had tolerated during his lifetime.

In addition to this will, Chertkov prepared another statement which

father signed on July 31. According to this, father's writings were to become common property, and all his manuscripts were to be kept and edited by Chertkov and, after Chertkov's death, by those to whom he and I should leave this right.

One evening when father was going to bed and I was in the next room—his study—he called to me through the closed door.

"Sasha!"

"Yes, papa?"

"I wanted to tell you about the will. If any money should be left from the first edition of the works, it would be well to buy Yasnaia Poliana from mama and your brothers and give it to the peasants. . . ."

"Very well, papa."

He never spoke to me of this matter again.

Whether mother guessed what was going on or whether she was really ill, she harried father without respite. With Chertkov she was sharp, even rude, hinting that he was coming to the house too often. "It looks as though we were seeing enough of each other—I believe it is about twice a day"; or "Strangers tear into the house, worse than policemen," she would say when Chertkov was there. But worst of all, she declared, in everybody's hearing, that she had taken measures to have Chertkov banished from Tula province again.

At night she would keep father awake, rushing into his room; and several times she simulated suicide. I tried to reason with her, pleaded with her to have pity on father; she shouted at me and threatened to drive me out of the house. Whenever I went into father's study she immediately followed; she gave us no chance to talk business, but interrupted, interfered, and in every way tried to separate us. Once when father rang for me, mother entered too, through another door, "Sonia, will you go out, I want to explain some letters to Sasha." But she would not leave.

Later, in the Remington room, I sorted letters and found his note: "For God's sake, none of you make reproaches to mama, and be good and gentle with her." It was evident that father had again decided to give in to her in everything. That day he asked Bulgakov to tell Chertkov not to come to see him.

I wondered at his patience and meekness. How could he bear all this without irritation and think constantly of mother, of her peace of mind, of doing nothing that was unpleasant to her? I could not do it. My patience gave way, I lost my temper—it seemed so unjust, so

terrible to me that, because of mother, father was wasting away every day, every hour. My soul cried out. I wept and lived in anguish, not knowing what to do. All right, father does not want to hurt mother, wants to combat her with love to the end—but we children, how can we too stand aside and watch mother killing him and do nothing at all? And again, what could I do? What could I? If mother was ill, she should be placed in a sanatorium, I argued. A sick woman should not dispose of the fate of so many people, while the elder children quietly watched their father's sufferings. Every day of this ordeal shortened his life by months—perhaps by years. But what could I accomplish alone—the youngest, the unloved, whom the family were accustomed to consider as a mere girl not to be reckoned with?

It was easy for me to keep from getting angry with mother when I felt that she was ill; but when I saw motives of financial interest in her acts, when I saw how she feared that will, it was difficult to follow father's example and be kind to her. I envied sister Tania. She was more fortunate than I. She could not be persuaded that mother was guided by any motives of self-interest, she saw in her only a nervously disturbed woman, an exhausted mother, and she loved her. If only I could have done the same! How much easier it would have been!

The situation became more and more acute. We had no rest night or day. The least pretext sufficed to throw mother into extreme excitement. Tania came at last with Mikhail Sergeyevich, and immediately she and her husband were drawn into the drama which was being enacted. We sat up all night discussing it. Tania and Mikhail Sergeyevich tried to prove to mother all the incongruity of her demands; they told her that it was a long time since father's soul had belonged to her; that father was free to will his works to whomever he pleased; that no one, not even she, his wife, had the right to interfere with that.

But no arguments were of any avail. Mother screamed: "I shall kill myself, I shall take poison if he does not will the diaries to me! The diaries or my life!" And she repeated continually: "I am exhausted, I am ill, they have drawn all my strength from me!"

Tania finally lost control of herself and burst out, "You keep saying 'I, I, I—but you are the one who torments yourself—and why don't you think of others—of father, of me, of Sasha! You know we are all exhausted!"

For the first time in a very long period, father drew a free breath. He even laughed at table when Tania told us how a camera man had come to Kochety and filmed a peasant wedding. The wedding was in a herdsman's family. The man was drunk, treated everybody, and

whenever a guest refused a drink, the herdsman shouted at the top of his lungs, "Your health!" drank the glass of vodka in one gulp, and thereupon swore solemnly that he drank for the last time and was ready that minute to go to the church and promise never to drink again.

"But then why didn't you go with him? *Il fallait le prendre au mot*," father said to Tania. "You have read the description of my meeting with the young peasant—he promised me not to drink."

What a joy it was to look at father! How he revived, how affectionately he looked at Tania!

In the morning Tania said to me, "What father does at present is a sacred work of love, it is better than all the thirty volumes he has written. Even if he dies while suffering as he does, acting as he does, I shall say he could not have acted otherwise." And she wept. When I told these words of Tania's to father he said, "Wise girl, Tanichka!" and he, too, burst out sobbing.

In the evening, he again rested a little, under Tania's protection. He read Mille's story *Le repos hebdomadaire* and enjoyed the evening greatly. He was sitting in an easy chair and, as I passed by, it seemed to me that he said something. "What is it, papa?"

"My girls are good girls!" he said and smiled.

But this rest was of short duration. Tania, Mikhail Sergeyevich, and I had to go to Tula; the horses were being harnessed. Father entered the room with a letter in his hand.

"This is something—the Lord only knows—the Lord knows—someone please go to Sofia Andreyevna! I have written her that I will make any concessions, that I love her—and she will not read it; she cries that she will kill herself!"

I had never before seen father in such a state. He was pale, his voice broke, it was obvious that he could hardly stand. Tania ran to mother, Mikhail Sergeyevich and I followed father. He told us to hand mother the letter when she asked for it, and Varvara Mikhailovna and I hurried to make a copy of it. This was the letter:

1. My present diaries I shall not give to anyone but shall keep myself.
2. The old diaries I shall take from C[hertkov] and keep myself, probably in a bank.
3. If the thought worries you that those passages in the diaries, where under the immediate impression I write of our differences and conflicts, might be used by future biographers unfavorably disposed to you, then—leaving aside the fact that such expressions of passing feelings as there are in my and also in your own diaries, cannot give any true idea of our real

relations—if you are afraid of that, I am glad of the opportunity to express in my diary, or simply in a letter, as it were, my attitude to you and my appraisal of your life. My attitude to you and my appraisal of you is this: just as I have loved you from my youth, so I have never ceased, regardless of various causes of estrangement, to love you and still love you. These causes of coolness—I am not speaking of the cessation of marital relations, as such cessation could only eliminate the deceptive expressions of real love—these causes have been, first, my increasing estrangement from the interests of worldly life and my aversion to them, while you did not want to and could not part with them since you did not have in your soul those premises which brought me to my convictions—a very natural thing for which I do not reproach you.

Forgive me if what I say is unpleasant for you; but what is now passing between us is so important that we must not be afraid either to tell or to hear the whole truth. Second, your temper in late years has become increasingly irritable, despotic and ill-contained. The appearance of these traits could not help cooling—not the real feeling—but its manifestations. This was second.

Third, the chief cause was a fateful one, the one of which both you and I are equally without guilt—our entirely opposite understanding of the meaning and purpose of life. Everything in our understanding of life has been exactly opposite: mode of life, attitude toward people and toward the means of living; toward property, which I considered sin and you thought an indispensable condition of life. As to the mode of life, I have submitted to conditions which to me were painful in order not to part with you; but you thought that this meant a concession to your opinions—and the misunderstanding between us grew deeper and deeper. There were other causes of coolness of which we both were guilty, but of these I shall not speak, for they have no bearing on the question. The important thing is that, despite all the misunderstandings that there have been, I have never ceased to love and appreciate you. And my appraisal of your life with me is as follows:

I, a debauched man, deeply corrupted sexually, no longer in my first youth, married you, a clean, good, clever, eighteen-year-old girl; and regardless of my dirty, vicious past, you have lived with me for nearly fifty years, loving me; lived a laborious, difficult life, a working life, bearing, nursing, rearing children and caring for me, resisting those temptations which could so easily overcome any woman in your position: strong, healthy, handsome—you lived in such a way that I dare not reproach you anything. And as to your not following me in my strictly spiritual development, I cannot reproach you for that because the spiritual life of anyone is a secret between that person and God, and other people cannot demand anything in this domain; if I demanded that of you, I erred and am guilty.

This is the true description of my attitude to you and of my estimate of

you; and as to the things that may be found in the diaries, I only know that there is nothing crude there and nothing that would contradict what I am writing now. So this is the third point which may, but should not, upset you with regard to the diaries.

4. If at the present moment my relations with C[hertkov] distress you, I am ready to cease seeing him, although I will say this will be disagreeable not so much to me as to him. I know how painful it will be to him. But if you want it, I shall do it.

5. If you do not accept these conditions of mine of a good, peaceful life, then I shall take back my promise not to leave you. I shall go—probably not to C[hertkov]; I shall even make it a necessary condition that he shall not come to live near me—but I shall leave quite certainly, because it is impossible to continue living like this. I might go on in this way if I were able to bear your sufferings calmly, but this I cannot do.

Last night you went away upset and suffering. I wanted to sleep, but I began, not to think, but to feel you, and did not sleep but listened until one o'clock and until two; and later awoke again and listened, and either in my dreams or almost in my dreams I saw you.

Think it over quietly, calmly, dear friend, consult your heart, sense it all, and you will decide everything as it should be. Of myself I shall say that on my part I have, just the same, decided that I cannot act otherwise. I cannot. My dear, stop tormenting not others but yourself, because you are suffering a hundred times as much as the others. And this is all.

LEV TOLSTOY

July 14, morning.

When I took this letter to mother, she paid no attention to it and kept repeating to Tania that, as long as father did not surrender the diaries to her, she would not stop being ill.

The next day, Tania and Mikhail Sergeyevich took the diaries to Tula. Father had firmly decided, as he wrote to mother, to send them to the bank for safe keeping.

No sooner had the Sukhotins left than mother's extreme nervous condition returned. She went to father's study and began imploring him to give her the key of the strong box in which the diaries were to be kept. She fell on her knees before him and sobbed. Father refused and, to cut short the painful scene, went down to the garden. As he walked under the windows, mother shouted to him from upstairs, "Liovochka! I drank a bottle of opium!" Without stopping to catch his breath, father ran up to her, to the second floor. She met him with the words, "I said that purposely. I only said so—I did not drink it!" When, gasping for breath, he was telling me this, I thought that he was going to die. He was as pale as a sheet and spoke of pres-

sure in his chest. I counted his pulse: it was over a hundred and quite erratic.

I ran to mother, and again and again told her that she was going to kill father if she continued in that manner. And from her I ran to father, who was in the garden. He was walking down a path in a terrible state of excitement.

"Go and tell mama that by acting as she does now she will force me to leave the house," he said. "And I shall leave, quite certainly, if she goes on. And about the diaries; tell her that I shall give the key to Mikhail Sergeyevich. This is my wish, and I shall do so."

I told mother what he had said, and added for myself that it was imperative for her to undergo treatment; that I could not believe that a well person could consciously torment father as she did. "All right," she said, "I agree to have myself treated but not by Nikitin. Let a psychiatrist come from Moscow."

In the evening, when Tania and Mikhail Sergeyevich returned from Tula, my sister and I sat and talked. Father came in. We spoke of mother and decided to call the doctors.

"I know," father said, "that it is not the right thing to give in, but this is so hard on me; I feel so bad that at times I do not have the strength to show the necessary firmness. Even physical strength has limits!" he added in a sad tone. "But are we not committing a crime again now?" he said suddenly, jumping up from his seat with a frightened look. "She will think again that we are plotting against her."

"No, no, mama is taking a walk with Mikhail Sergeyevich." He nevertheless went toward the door but stopped and asked, "Don't you two find it tedious staying together?"

"No," we replied both at the same time. "Why?"

"Because you are really so much alike!" he said and left the room.

Then Tania and Mikhail Sergeyevich left. Again we were alone with mother and with brother Liova, who only added fuel to the fire, involuntarily exciting mother against father. He believed her right in everything and accused father. Once—before Tania's last visit—when mother was in a fit of hysteria, he had rushed into father's room and shouted at him at the top of his voice, "How can you sit quietly here when she is likely to kill herself any minute? It's cruel, it's mean!" Father even thought he heard Liova swear at him. When father told me about this, he was crying. After Tania's visit, Liova asked me, "What did father tell you of my conversation with him?"

"That is my own business," I said.

"Tania told me that father said I had called him —. Tell father that I am sorry. I did not say that, I said something else. It's good that he did not hear what I really said. But it is revolting! He, with his 'forgiveness' and 'non-resistance,' sits quietly in his armchair while mother lies on the floor and is ready to kill herself!" Liova made no secret of the fact that he did not love father, that there were even moments when he hated him.

From all these conversations and disturbances, I felt that my strength was completely giving way. I began to retire to my room even before the evening tea. Some evenings father would come in. Once, after a disagreeable conversation with Liova, I went to my room; but Goldenweiser came to say good night, and then father. Conversation turned upon Tania and Mikhail Sergeyevich.

"I want to boast," father said. "Wise people can see an endless variety of human characters. Take for instance Mikhail Sergeyevich. He is quite a peculiar character. On one side, an aristocrat; and on the other, spiritual depth, firm religious principles—honest, truthful. He does not desire or seek a change of the external state of things but tries to live a good life in the one that exists."

We talked of Pascal, who occupied father's mind just then; talked of horses and dogs, joked. I began to feel so cheerful that when father and Goldenweiser left I dressed again and went to the dining-room. "Now this is nice!" father said, when he saw me there. We sat at the tea table and talked merrily. Mother was taking a bath. I told them how Platonov, the merchant, usually sent his private carriage and horses from Tula to Moscow so that his wife, who was going to the capital, would not have to take a hired coach at the station.

"That is nothing," father said. "There is a merchant at Elets who never goes on railway trains. He says, 'I am not a hound that I should run at a whistle!'"

We all laughed, and father more than the others. Then a bat flew in through the window, we all jumped up, chased it, shouted, and laughed again.

When the physicians whom we summoned for mother—Doctor Nikitin and a professor of nervous disorders, Rossolimo—came, Tania and Mikhail Sergeyevich had already left. Liova viewed the doctors' visit skeptically. "I shall tell them that it is not mother who must be treated—she is entirely well—but father who has gone out of his mind," he said.

The physicians diagnosed extreme hysteria and paranoia. They

advised us positively to have father and mother separated. But when they told this to mother, there was a terrible storm: she would not hear of it, under any conditions.

Dmitri Vasilievich Nikitin saw father's sufferings but was at a loss how to help us. He examined father's heart and found it very poor. "I will tell you confidentially," he said to me, "you still have many, many difficult hours before you."

And so nothing came of the physicians' visit. I had hoped that the whole family would gather, or at least the elder ones, and would confer with the doctors as to how to protect father from constant disturbances. How could they leave an eighty-two-year-old man to these sufferings? But the physicians were gone, and again I felt completely alone and helpless.

Mother probably suspected the existence of father's will. She summoned brother Andrei, and we awaited his arrival fearfully.

"Don't you see," father said to me one of those days, "you keep grieving about it, but I wish for death so much! It is the only release. Life is such a burden to me! And I wish to tell you still another thing: I am thinking more and more often that you and I should go away somewhere. My thoughts now are of such important things—death is drawing near—the last thing one wants to do is to smile and pretend. Ah, how false all this is, how false!"

Another time he said to my sister-in-law Olga, "It is well enough to say that if Sofia Andreyevna agreed only for a minute that she is at fault, everything would be all right, and she would feel perfectly easy! But everything works out exactly the opposite way—it has been thirty years now, and the longer it goes on the worse it is; all her efforts are directed to justifying, whitening herself and condemning others."

"What is it, papa," Olga asked, "sickness or laxity?"

"Laxity, laxity," father said. "Absence of any restraint except that of public opinion."

Brother Mikhail came with his family. He soon left, but his family stayed. I talked a good deal with his wife, who was a dear, sensible woman, and understood everything. What fine wives my brothers had! Misha once said with an air of deep thought: "There is one thing in which we are undoubtedly better than our wives." "What is it?" somebody asked. "We have shown much better taste than they."

I wondered at Misha's attitude toward father's will. What did it matter whether or not there existed a legal document expressing it? We all knew father's wishes perfectly well—he had expressed them

more than once by word of mouth and in writing. Was it possible, then, that the question could arise whether or not to fulfil them? My brother's wife agreed with me entirely and said that Misha was acting under mother's influence.

In a few days brother Andrei came. He had just received a letter from Tania, who wrote him of the state of things at Yasnaia Poliana and pleaded with him not to pour oil on the flames, to remember that mother was not well and that we should pity father. When I went to the Remington room, Andrei was sitting there. "What an idiotic letter from Tania," he said. "I disagree with it from beginning to end."

"Why?" I asked.

"First, I do not consider mother to be ill. You've called in some Yids, they've told you the devil-knows-what lies, and you are glad because it plays your game. 'Hatred is not natural to people,' " he read aloud from the letter in his hand. "And all papa does, with his 'non-resistance,' is hating and doing harm to people."

"What are you saying, Andriusha," I said, revolted. "When did he offend or harm anyone?"

"He does nothing but that! It is not for nothing that he has antagonized all his sons and, as for me, he gets angry with me every time I come."

"That is not true! If he does not approve of your acts, it's your own fault!"

"I spit on the opinions of an old man who has grown foolish! All decent people approve of my acts. And he keeps growling at everybody like a vicious dog."

"Andriusha," I said, scarcely able to speak, "I work in this room, this is my office, please go out. You are saying things to which I cannot listen!"

"Shut up!" he bellowed. "Don't you dare call me down! All of you here have lost your minds and that's why you don't like a sane person's opinions."

I was agitated long after he had left the room.

At dinner the conversation was about distributing seed grain among the peasants. Then it shifted to theaters, ballets, circuses, gowns, and a method of eliminating wrinkles. Father sat without saying a word.

July 27 was a day which is a very painful memory. I had hardly finished my morning coffee when Andrei called me, but when I was halfway upstairs Liova also called me.

"All right, all right, go to Liova," said Andrei, "I'll speak with you later on."

I went to Liova, and Andrei followed me.

"Look here," Liova began, "mother heard Bulgakov talk yesterday about some document; she decided that it was the will and she is very much upset again. Tell me, has father any kind of a will?"

I said that I could not, during father's lifetime, discuss what was to happen after his death and talk of his will, and that therefore I refused to answer.

"But just tell us—is there a will or not?"

My brothers tormented me thus for a long time and would not let me go. At last I declared resolutely that I did not wish to talk about it. I went to father's study to warn him and agree with him about the answers to my brothers' questions. While I was telling of my conversation with my brothers, we heard footsteps behind the door. I opened it and found myself face to face with Andrei. He walked in.

"Father, I must talk with you."

"What is it?—speak."

"I would rather not say it in Sasha's presence."

"No, let her stay, I have no secrets from her," father said.

"Well, you see, father," Andrei began with great lack of assurance, "there is such turmoil in the family—mother is upset—and we wanted to ask you if you have any sort of a will?"

"I do not consider myself obliged to answer you," father said with unaccustomed firmness.

"Ah-ah-ah? So you don't want to answer?"

"I do not."

Andrei rose. "This is a different story then!" And he went out, slamming the door.

"Oh-oh-oh," father groaned. "My Lord! My Lord!"

When Andrei met me afterward on the staircase, he shouted at me: "Why did you hang around there with your crazy father?"

Next morning, my brothers again tormented me with questions. I refused to answer them as obstinately as I had the day before. But in the evening, a new ordeal awaited me. Mother came very, very close to me and gazing steadily into my eyes asked, "Sasha, do you ever tell lies?"

"I try not to."

"Then tell me: has father a will or not?"

"I told your sons this morning, when they kept after me with these questions, and I shall tell you the same thing: I cannot and will not,

during father's lifetime, speak of his death. I consider it monstrous. And if you care to remember, mama, that time when you came to me and read me your will, I refused to listen to it. I consider it vile that sons should go and ask their father about his will!"

"Ah," mother said, "how silly you are! It is not at all the money that matters. It is that Lev Nikolayevich has deprived me of his confidence. I love him, and it pains me to know nothing."

"That is not true!" I said indignantly. "It is not true! If all of you loved him, you never would ask him about his dispositions concerning his death; you would not cause him such pain but would quietly submit to his wishes."

Pavel Ivanovich Biriukov came to visit us. Father rejoiced at his coming and decided to tell him of his will and of all that was passing in the family. He expected support from Pavel Ivanovich—but found disapproval. Biriukov told father that he ought to have called together the whole family and told them what he wanted, and that the family would have done it. He disapproved of father's writing a formal, legal document.

How little did Pavel Ivanovich know the situation and how he overestimated father's strength. I was younger and stronger and yet I felt totally exhausted. On that day, when father was again tormented with thoughts about the will and reproached himself for what he had done, I lapsed into such despair that I cried all day. An affectionate letter came to me from Tania and I cried. I began telling father about something—and cried again.

He comforted me and asked me what had happened.

"You cannot imagine how many curses and insults addressed to you I have heard in these last days," I told him through my tears, "and there is nothing I can do, nothing, not even make people keep still."

"There, there, darling," father said, "we shall try to make it all go better—let's just stick together!"

Again he began to think about the will, trying to decide whether he did right or wrong. When Chertkov learned of father's doubts, he wrote him a long letter in which he recalled to his mind the whole history of the will. And again father came to the decision that he would leave the will in force.

To V. G. CHERTKOV:

I am writing on this scrap, being on a walk in the woods. Last night and this morning, I have been thinking of your letter of yesterday. There are chiefly two feelings that it called forth in me: loathing for all the

manifestations of coarse self-interest and indelicacy which I either did not see or else saw and forgot; and chagrin and repentance at having hurt you by my letter in which I expressed regret over what I had done. And the conclusion I have come to is that Pavel Ivanovich [Biriukov] is not right, nor am I in agreement with him; and that I entirely approve your actions; though I am still dissatisfied with mine. I feel that it was possible to act differently, although I do not know how. At present I no longer regret what I have done—I mean, having written such a will as I wrote—and I can be only thankful to you for the part you took in this matter.

I shall tell Tania about it now, and this will be so good!

When several days previous to this I had asked father to inform Tania of the will, he replied that he would ask Chertkov's advice. I said that Chertkov had wanted him to do it long ago. "As for me, there cannot be any question of how much I want it," father said. "Who can be nearer to me than Tania?" The following morning I was not yet dressed when Tania came into my room. "Papa has told me everything."

"How glad I am!" I exclaimed. "Otherwise I should have felt that everybody knew about it except the person who is nearest of all!"

"There is only one thing," continued Tania. "You, too, should make a will in my name; otherwise, in case you should die soon after father, everything would go to our brothers."

"It's been done already. And you don't mind the will's being written in my name?"

"No, I am very glad it was done this way," said Tania, "and most of all because now my relations with mother will not be entirely spoiled; although perhaps even so she would not have disowned me."

After work, I knocked at father's door. He called loudly: "Come in, of course!" as if he awaited my coming.

"Papa, I am awfully glad that you have told Tania and that she received it as she did!"

"Yes, I am also very, very glad. I asked her if she would be able to keep a secret from her husband, and she said 'Yes.' Then I told her everything. And afterward, I told her that she could tell her husband, but she herself thinks that it would be better not to."

But it seems that our first impression of Tania's attitude on the question of the will was a mistaken one. A few days later, Tania told me that she thought perhaps the will should not have been written; and that, in any case, father's works up to the year 1880 should not have been willed to become common property.

Some days later, I entered father's study. On the eve of that day we two had decided to go and stay with Tania.

"The Lord alone knows what mama is saying," he told me. "She is ill, one should pity her, I feel that I am ready to do all she wants me to do—not go to Tania's and stay here with her like her nurse to the end of my life."

"But I no longer feel that I am able to be a nurse," I said angrily, and left the room. But peace left me because I had replied rudely and hurt him; and, after some distressing hours, I went back to his study. He lay on the divan with a book. I went to him and kissed him on the head. "Forgive me!"

We both cried, and he repeated several times, "I'm so glad! So glad! I felt so sad!"

CHAPTER XXVII

KOCHETY

ONCE Dima Chertkov asked father to explain certain sayings to him.

"What was it he wanted to know about?" mother asked when the conversation touched on the subject.

"Well, it was a saying—one of the more serious ones, I don't remember which," said father, "and another one, less important."

"And what was that?" mother asked again.

"He asked me about the saying in the *Cycle of Reading*: 'The pitcher falls upon a stone—it's too bad for the pitcher. The stone falls on the pitcher—again it's too bad for the pitcher.' And in my understanding it means that, in a struggle, the cruder the man, the more certain his victory."

"Well, it's altogether wrong," said mother. "Whose saying is it?"

"A Chinese one."

"Savage people," she said.

That night when I went into father's room to say good night to him as usual, he said to me, "Sasha, you know mother understood very well the parable about the pitcher and took it as applying to her."

Father's health was failing every day. I felt that he scarcely kept going. The pitcher was going to break inevitably.

The physicians had directed that father and mother should be separated, and Tania and I decided to take father to the estate of M. S. Sukhotin at Kochety. But mother began to weep, begged to be taken along, and insisted that she was quite ill. She tormented father until late at night, asking him to say that he wanted her to come.

"Well, do as you wish, Sonia," he said. In the morning, she packed her things to go with us.

"How silly it all is," father said in a sad, weak voice. "What is our trip for if mama is going with us? I haven't slept enough, I don't feel well."

On the day before, Chertkov had received notice from the Ministry of the Interior that he might stay in the Tula district. All were elated at Teliatinki: grandmother, Anna Konstantinovna, Olga and her children, and Vladimir Grigorievich himself. The news was concealed

from mother so as not to provoke a storm before our departure and spoil father's trip.

We rode to Kochety very comfortably. There were two compartments in the car; father sat in one, all the rest of us in the other. He read his letters, drank his coffee, and dozed. He was so weak that I was anxious about him.

We arrived about seven o'clock. Father was very tired. At night, when he retired and mother left his room, I went to him, carrying the diaries—the small, intimate one and the large one. He met me: "Give me the diaries." He took them from me and turned to go back. Mother stood behind his back. Upon noticing her, he returned the large diary to me, but then immediately came back and took it again. Mother followed him. I heard her ask, "Is it from me you conceal the diaries?"

"Yes, from you," said father.

"Just the same, I am your wife—"

I did not hear anything further.

This incident served as pretext for excitement the whole next day, but Tania insisted so categorically that mother should not talk with anyone about the questions that upset her that she finally began to quiet down. Then suddenly she found the newspaper item about Chertkov's being again permitted to stay in the Tula district.

"Here is my death sentence!" she exclaimed in a loud voice.

All the rest of that day, she continued in a state of excitement. She wrote Stolypin a letter about Chertkov; I do not know whether it was mailed or not. "I shall kill Chertkov," she shrieked. "I shall pay someone to poison him."

Then brother Seriozha came with Count Olsufiev, and she quieted down a little. In the evening, we played games with Tania's little daughter Tanichka, and Mika, the son of Tania's stepson Liova Sukhotin. The children sang and danced, and grandfather and grandmother laughed as much as the rest of us. I loved mother's way of laughing. She laughed without a sound, shaking her whole body and covering her mouth with her hand, as though her own laughing embarrassed her. That evening she was so pitiful, meek and dear; how we should have loved her if only she had always been like that!

On the evening of the next day, we all went to the schoolhouse, where Chekhov's *Malefactor* was to be enacted, and lantern slides were shown. The yard was pitch dark and there was mud under our feet; Tania lighted the way for us with a lantern. Mother took father's

arm, but he was hardly able to walk himself and after stumbling once disengaged his arm and walked alone.

The schoolhouse was jammed with children. The boys acted well, and father laughed till the tears ran.

Then there were long and tedious preparations for the lantern slides. They showed us the life of Saint Sergius of Radonezh. Standing at the screen, the teacher, stammering and embarrassed by the visitors and chiefly by father's presence, told us how Sergius of Radonezh, after the prophecy of a monk, miraculously and at once learned to read and write. Father rose. "I am going at once," he said, then changed his mind and sat down; but in a few minutes rose again and resolutely walked to the door. "What trash they stuff into their heads. Horrible! Horrible!" Mother, Tania, Olsufiev, Seriozha, Dushan Petrovich, and I followed him.

As usual, when the atmosphere cleared, father again began to work intensely. One day when I went into his room with the mail, he said, "Well, Sasha, you keep asking me for work—I'll soon give you some. I am walking and thinking all the time."

That evening after dinner, he called the children, Mika and Tannichka, to his room and told them a story. I wrote it down, in short-hand, sitting under the window so as not to interfere with the telling.

There were two sisters. They had children. One had a girl Sonia, the other had a boy Petia. One day the two sisters went visiting, but the children went ahead of them with their nurse. On the way, an accident happened, a wheel broke and they could not go on. There was a village nearby. The peasants told them, "We'll fix it!" There was nothing left to do but to stay until the wheel could be fixed. The children and the nurse went into a hut. There they saw a little girl and a woman. The little girl was very thin, her dress was ragged. She was crying. Sonia and Petia asked the woman, "Why is she crying?" "She cries because she wants some milk and hasn't any."

Nurse told Sonia and Petia, "Now I'll give you something to eat—drink your milk." But Sonia said, "I won't drink the milk. Give it to the girl." Nurse said, "You mustn't do that. Drink your milk." But Sonia and Petia said, "We shan't drink any milk if you don't give some to the girl." Then nurse gave some to the girl, and then another boy came along. Again Sonia and Petia said, "We won't drink the milk, nurse. Give it to the boy."

Then Petia said, "Why is it that we have a great deal of everything and they have nothing?" Nurse said, "God ordered it so." Sonia said, "That is not true! If God did it, then that God is wicked, wicked! I'm not going to pray to him!" "If God did that, we don't want to pray to such a God,"

Petia said, and suddenly he heard a voice from the top of the stove. An old, old man was lying there.

"Listen, you little clever chap, you say that God is wicked! No, God is not wicked. He commanded us to love everybody. It's people who have made it so!" "And why did they make it so," Sonia asked, "that some have much and others haven't anything?" And Petia said, "When I grow up to be big, I shall make it so that all have equally." And the old man said, "Well, see that you do it, children. God help you!"

But whether they did it or not, I don't know.

"Did you understand it, children?" father asked.

"Yes, yes!"

"Well, now, sing!"

And all, including grandfather himself, sang "God's little bird knows no care nor toil. . . ."

"And can you have a candy?"

"We'll ask mama!" and they skipped away.

When father next met Liova Sukhotin he said to him, laughing, "Well, Liovochka, I told your son a socialist story!"

The next morning, he asked the children if they had understood his story. Mika had not understood, but Tania told it to me from start to finish, and when she reached the place where the children refused their milk, she spoke very softly, and it looked to me as though she were going to cry any minute. I told father and he was visibly touched.

Brother Liova called mother back to Yasnaia Poliana. This threw her again into her nervous excitement. She wept; accused father of egoism, complained that he would let her go alone.

To comfort father, I volunteered to accompany mother. We stayed a few days at Yasnaia Poliana. Without father, mother was much more calm. But as soon as we returned to Kochety her nervousness returned. A photographer from the Drankov moving-picture firm came and pressed us for a chance to photograph father. This was enough to upset mother. At any cost, she wished to be photographed with him, and she put as much emotion into the situation as if it were a question of life and death. "They printed in some paper," she said, "that Tolstoy has divorced his wife! Let them all see now that it is not true!" During the photographing, she begged father several times to look at her.

Every day, she was more and more insistent that father should go back to Yasnaia Poliana. She suffered from neuralgia and refused dinner. No sooner would father step into her room than she would begin to toss in her bed, moaning and sighing. Things went on this



Tolstoy in a characteristic pose



Tolstoy and his granddaughter Tatianka

way for a week. Once when father had gone horseback riding, mother ran to the park in a state of extreme excitement. When father returned, he went to look for her instead of lying down to rest and, failing to find her, asked Dushan Petrovich to look for her. Mikhail Sergeyevich finally found her sitting on a bench by the pond, and Dushan Petrovich became an involuntary listener to their conversation. They both shouted so that one could hear them down in the village. "I never saw that calm man in such a state of anger!" Dushan Petrovich said later.

Mikhail Sergeyevich told mother that if she did not cut short her comedies, Lev Nikolayevich would leave her. He and Tania and all the others would certainly insist on that.

"Your glory as Tolstoy's wife will collapse! Tolstoy running away from his wife who has poisoned his existence!"

"I shall write to the papers! I shall justify myself!" my mother retorted.

"No, there won't be any justifying then. He'll be gone and gone he'll be. A man in his eighty-second year does not leave his wife just like that for nothing at all!"

Mikhail Sergeyevich said that no one believed in her mental trouble any longer.

"Yes, I really am ill!" she defended herself.

"If you are, then follow the doctor's advice. Part with Lev Nikolayevich; otherwise he will be forced to leave you, you'll see!"

"And if he does, I'll print a death letter in the papers about all he did, and then I'll poison myself and disgrace him all over Russia."

"But nobody will believe you--nobody!" Mikhail Sergeyevich shouted, beside himself.

Finally, mother became quieter and went home. But in the evening, she again began to demand that father should go home with her or at least fix the day of his coming. Father replied that he was not a small boy, that he regretted having given her promises before, and that he would not give in to her any more. Mother at once relented, begged his pardon, said that she would release him from all his promises.

On September 12, mother left for Yasnaia Poliana alone. For ten days, we lived quietly at Kochety, resting from all we had gone through. Father worked a good deal of the time. In the course of those few days he received much news that interested and moved him deeply: Kupchinsky's book against war, a letter from Nikolayev about his son who intended to refuse military service, a letter from

Bulgakov who had resolved, together with Seriozha Bulygin, to refuse to serve as a soldier, and, finally, the story of the tortures of Kudrin, who had also refused to serve.

I thought, "Do all these people know that father himself suffers torment not less than theirs? That he bears 'the cross of that love than which there is none greater,' as Tania said?"

But I could find no humility in my heart, nothing but terror and despair. Seriozha returned to Nikolskoye-Viazemskoye; Tania was going to stay at Kochety; no help from the other brothers was to be hoped for; and father and I were again going back to Yasnaia Poliana. "He will not hold out—he will die," I kept thinking with anguish.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE LAST MONTH AT YASNAIA POLIANA

WO buggies had been sent to the station for us. Father was silent all the way. Suddenly a horseman's silhouette appeared before us.

"What is that, Ivan?"

"It's the Circassian the Countess sent to meet us with a torch."

The night was clear and starry and the road could be seen very well without a torch. "Don't light it," Ivan shouted, "go ahead—tell the peasants to make way for us!" An endless line of carts preceded us on the highway, going to the market at Tula. The Circassian quickly trotted ahead. "Keep to the right! Keep to the right, you devils, do you hear?" he shouted wildly at the peasants.

Mother met us on the steps with a suffering look. At tea she groaned—everything was as before. "She's quite low," father whispered to me when we were alone for a minute. Yes, she was quite low: she berated father for not having come earlier, in time for her saint's day; she called him an old egoist, an "Epicurean" who stayed where it pleased him, without a thought of her. "I cannot bear to see his old, bent figure," she said to me. "He's so repulsive to me, so repulsive." Tears were choking me.

September 23 was their wedding anniversary. In the morning, mother came out dressed in a white silk gown; chocolate was served for breakfast, everything was done as on a holiday—only in our hearts there was gloom.

When I entered father's study, I noticed that both the picture of father and me and the one of Chertkov with my nephew Ilyusha were missing from the wall. I found out that mother had removed them and hung her own picture in their place.

After lunch, mother began to prepare the screen against which she was going to be photographed with father. She was much excited, not knowing whether he would consent to it since only a short time before he had promised her not to be photographed again for Chertkov. But he consented to avoid tears and words. The picture was not a success. The next day mother demanded that he be photographed with her out in the yard. It was cold, a strong wind blew; mother put on

her white gown and called father. I begged him to put on a hat and overcoat, but he waved me aside and went out without any warm wraps and with his head uncovered. He stood gloomily next to mother, his hands in his belt. Old lady Schmidt looked at the scene from a window, exclaiming indignantly. Mother tried to make father look toward her, without success; father stood motionless.

I was beside myself with indignation and with fear that father might catch cold. Unable to control my feelings, I began to speak my thoughts aloud. I did not know what I was saying; Maria Alexandrovna Schmidt tried to quiet me, "What are you shouting for, Sasha?"

When father came in, I repeated to him what I had been saying. "For the sake of mother, who does you so much harm, you have sacrificed a friend—a daughter! It was not even I who put my picture on the wall, it was yourself—and now you don't dare to put it back!" It hurts to remember that outburst. I would give much to know that it had never happened.

Father slowly shook his head. "You make yourself like her," he said to me and walked out.

All day I did not go into his room. I felt ashamed. At dinner, mother talked of sending to the *Russkoye Slovo* the photographs made during the day. No one else talked. In the evening I sat and typed, as usual, in the Remington room. A heavy stone pressed on my heart. The bell rang. I was too much ashamed of myself to see father and sent Bulgakov. The next minute, the bell rang again. Again I did not go. Bulgakov came back and said that father was asking: "Why isn't Sasha coming?" I went in.

"Sasha, I want to dictate a letter to you."

"Very well."

I took pencil and paper and made ready to write. But in my heart was a longing to throw myself on him, to kiss his hands, and beg his pardon. I could not say a word.

"No, no, I don't need your stenography, I don't!" father said suddenly in a choked voice; his head dropped on the arm of the chair and he sobbed.

"Forgive me, forgive me!" I precipitately kissed his forehead, shoulder, and hands, "Forgive me!" For a long while we both wept. When he resumed dictation, I could hardly see my shorthand signs. Finally, we ended the letter.

"Forgive me!" I said again.

"I have already forgotten everything," he said.

When I came in the next morning, the first thing that caught my eye was my picture in its old place on the wall. I was afraid there might be trouble over it again. All the hurt of yesterday had subsided today and caused no pain. I thought only of his comfort.

"Papa," I said, "I want to ask you to take down my picture. You know, so that nothing else will happen. It's all the same to me now."

"No, no, it isn't for your sake I am doing this, it's for my own. Please help me to hang everything as it was before. Where did Chertkov's picture go?"

I showed him. When we had placed the pictures as before, he said, "So! Now it's nice!"

I resolved to go to Tapykovo for a day, to see Olga and the children. Varvara Mikhailovna decided to go with me. I said goodbye to father and made Maria Alexandrovna Schmidt, who was visiting us, promise me that she would let me know if anything happened.

We spent the whole day with Olga. About nine o'clock, we were sitting at the table and drinking tea. A maid came in. "Alexandra Lvovna! A letter for you from Yasnaia Poliana." I tore the envelope open—it was a letter from Maria Alexandrovna, begging me to come immediately. Mother was in a frightful state, Maria Alexandrovna feared for father's health.

I asked to have the coachman called as quickly as possible. "It's just plain impossible to drive," Ivan, the coachman, said. "It's muddy and dark and we'll break the carriage. We might try the paved highway through Tula." Going through Tula meant a trip of twenty-five versts. "Harness quickly. We'll go through Tula."

We arrived about midnight. Maria Alexandrovna met us on the steps and told us that, after we had left, mother went into father's study and, seeing the pictures in the old places, began to shoot at them with an air pistol and tore Chertkov's picture into shreds. Maria Alexandrovna was frightened and sent for us.

"You crazy fools, why did you come back?" mother shouted at us. She abused and reproached us, and also poor old lady Schmidt for letting us know. She declared to Varvara Mikhailovna that she could leave the house the next morning and go wherever she pleased. "I shall throw you out of the house as I threw out Chertkov!" she shouted at me.

I reached the depth of despair. There was no way out of this! I went to father's study—it was after midnight. He had not undressed yet and was sitting in his armchair. "Papa," I said, "what do you think,

would it be better if I went to stay at Teliatinki?" "Perhaps this will incite him to leave," I thought. To my surprise, father agreed.

In the morning I moved into the cold, dirty house at Teliatinki with my godsister Annushka and Varvara Mikhailovna. They stayed to take care of the house, and I went to Yasnaia Poliana. Father met me with joy. I asked him again what he thought of my leaving the house.

"You see," he said, "as a general principle I don't approve of your being unable to stand it, and leaving—you know, when people ask me questions like that in letters, I always answer that in my opinion one should not attempt to change the exterior conditions. This is one view of the matter; but, on the other hand, in my weakness, I am glad that you have left. It brings the solution nearer! This cannot continue. Sofia Andreyevna drove out Chertkov, she has insulted Maria Alexandrovna, has driven out Varia, almost driven you out. Don't be downhearted; everything is for the best."

I worked at Yasnaia Poliana all morning and went to Teliatinki at lunch time. My heart was sad. I doubted whether my act was right. Then, too, I was tormented by the thought of being away from father, unable to be with him any minute, to watch over his rest.

Annushka was busy in the kitchen, and Varvara Mikhailovna about the house. Both noticed my mood. "What are you pining for?" Annushka said. "You mustn't be sad. I'll bet you haven't got Marcus Aurelius with you. If only you would read something by him, all your trouble would be gone!"

"Marcus Aurelius?" I asked, hardly understanding.

"Why, yes, Marcus Aurelius, that's a little book the Count gave me. Whenever I feel sad, or Nikita goes on a spree, or there's no bread in the house, or anything else happens, right away I take out that book. 'Pet'ka,' I say, 'read to me!' And my heart becomes so light that I forget all my sorrows! You'd better get the book for yourself!"

In the evening, when I inspected the door locks, Annushka again remembered her dear Marcus Aurelius. "Why do you look at all the latches? Marcus Aurelius says we mustn't fear death. I sleep in the summer—two windows wide open—and I keep thinking: 'Eh, it's all from God! Let his sacred will be done!' I have thought a good deal about how to live better. I thought this way and that—nothing helped. Nothing helped except one thing—to think of death; that here you are alive today, and tomorrow all you will need is six feet of earth—and all your cares will be over, and you will feel you need nothing. All you will think about then is how not to sin today!"

Throughout that time I went to Yasnaia Poliana daily, sometimes twice a day, and did father's work as usual. It looked as though my departure had had a good effect on mother. She must have understood that she had gone too far, have been frightened by her own thoughtlessness, and become milder with father. She tried to persuade Varvara Mikhailovna and me to come back, but I decided to wait.

Tania and Seriozha came and advised mother to part with father and go to a sanatorium, but she would not listen to that.

On October 3, upon returning to Teliatinki, I was sorting papers when suddenly a messenger came with a note from Bulgakov: "Alexandra Lvovna, Lev Nikolayevich is ill. Come quickly!"

As quickly as I could, I hurried to Yasnaia Poliana. My legs bent under me as I was entering the hall. Ilya Vasilievich met me.

"Living?"

"Yes, living. But very low."

"Fainted?"

"Yes."

Dushan Petrovich ran by me with a hypodermic needle. Tania sat in the study, her eyes red from weeping. As I went into the bedroom, mother ran out, fell on her knees near the porch and began to pray: "Only not this time, not this time!" She repeated these words as if she were out of her mind. I hurried to the bedroom. Father was in convulsions; the whole bed shook.

Tania told me how it had happened. As usual, father went to rest at five o'clock. He did not rise for dinner, and, at half-past six, mother went to the door to learn whether he was up. She heard him scratch a match and went back to the drawing-room. But another half hour went by and father did not come out. Then Tania went into his room. The candle was lighted. He was tracing with his finger on the bed-cover, repeating the words: "faith, reason, religion, state." Evidently, these were words from the article on socialism which he had been writing that morning.

We called a physician from Tula. I insisted that we telegraph for Nikitin or Berkenheim. The convulsions recurred about every half hour. Once they were so violent that father was thrown across his bed. Consciousness did not return.

Tania and I sat in the study, next to the bedroom. Several times mother came in, fell to her knees and prayed, repeating, "Only not this time, only so it is not this time!" Chertkov came and, not daring to go upstairs, sat downstairs in the room of Dushan Petrovich. I was sure that father was dying. But toward night his condition improved.

Mother walked quickly into the drawing-room, opened a drawer, took out something and, holding it behind her back, brought it into the study. She put it in the brief case on the desk and went out again. Tania followed her and asked what she had been hiding.

"The diary," mother said. "Because they would surely have stolen it if father had died."

When father felt better I went into his room and kissed his hand. He had a look of joy in his eyes. Seriozha, who stood nearby, told him that I had come.

"Come—come from where?" father asked anxiously.

"No, no, papa," I said, "I did not come from anywhere, I have been here with you all the time."

"Ah—" he sighed with relief.

That night we hardly slept at all. Tania and I took turns getting up and coming to his door to listen. After three o'clock, I heard that father was no longer asleep and I walked in. He was now fully conscious and asked me how it had all happened. I promised to tell him the whole story in the morning and went out. In the morning, father was mentally vigorous and fresh as always, but so weak physically that he could hardly turn in bed. In one night he had lost as much flesh as though he had been ill a whole month.

Again Seriozha and Tania spoke with mother about calling a family council and said that they would compel her to part with father. Mother justified herself and complained to Seriozha about me. I decided to relate to my eldest brother all that was filling my heart. I told him how, for several months at a stretch, I had seen mother torture father and drive everybody away, convinced that everyone was guilty with the single exception of herself, press father for his author's rights, for his diaries, force him to be photographed with her; and I said that her motives were those of financial interest.

Seriozha and Tania disliked my sharp tone, but I said: "You can never manage to stay three days at a time in your parents' house; you immediately say that your family affairs and your children are waiting for you. And I live here in torment, looking at father's suffering. Please do not judge me!"

At half-past one, father rang the bell for me and asked me to read letters aloud to him. He dictated two answers, one to Krasheninnikov, son of the presiding judge, and the other to a workingman. His voice was weak and sickly, but his thoughts clear and forceful.

When I went into the anteroom downstairs, I was told that mother had been looking for me.

"Where is she?"

"On the steps."

I went out and found mother; she was without a wrap. "Did you wish to speak to me?"

"Yes, I wanted to make one more step for reconciliation. Forgive me!" And she began to kiss me, saying over and over again: "Forgive me, forgive!" I kissed her and asked her to be calm.

"Forgive me, forgive me. I give you my word of honor that I will never again insult you," she repeated, crossing herself, and kissing me. "Tell Varia that I beg her to pardon me. We have lived with her for four years and, if God is willing, we'll live together as many years again. I don't know what has come over me—over us—"

"Don't insult me any more," I was saying to her, while tears streamed from my eyes, "and father—father—don't hurt him. I cannot bear to see him tormented so."

"I shall not. I give you my word of honor I shall not torment him any more! You cannot believe what agony I suffered last night. Of course, I know I caused his illness and I would never forgive myself if he had died."

We were talking out in the yard. Someone passed by and looked at us with amazement. We stepped into the house. But Biriukov and another person were in the anteroom. We stopped between the double doors and continued to talk there. Mother asked me to come back home, to forgive and forget. She reiterated her promise not to torment father or me any more. "You will not believe how jealous I feel. Never in my life, not even in my youth, did I experience such jealousy as I feel now for Chertkov."

I believed her; and little by little the hard feeling, offense, mistrust that had accumulated in my heart and were rending it with acute pain, all melted away. Before me was my mother, unhappy, suffering intensely, perhaps not less so than my father. For the first time in a very long while I kissed her sincerely, calmed and soothed her as I would a child.

"Of course, things can be settled with Chertkov, too," she said. "I shall try to take myself in hand and let papa see him. Just so that he may feel happy and cheerful!"

In the evening, Varvara Mikhailovna and I moved back to Yasnaia Poliana. It was dark in the bedroom when I told father about my reconciliation with mother, but it seemed to me that he was crying.

Tania and Seriozha went home. For a few days everything was calm. Mother consented to let Chertkov come to father. But as soon

as he stepped into the house she became nervous again and resumed her eavesdropping.

On October 10, Nazhivin¹ came. We spoke of his daughter's death. She had been buried without church rites. Nazhivin was saying that it weighed on him, that something was missing.

"What does it matter?" father said. "This is something that has no relation to life. She died, and was buried, and earth thrown over her. And this is without importance, just as it does not matter what shoes you put on or what kind of soap you use. The memory of the person—her memory—is important; but these rites have nothing in common with life and they are unnecessary and of no importance. An old woman prays to the Heavenly Queen—I can respect the old woman, but I do not need it for myself. I have already been reborn. My daughter Masha died: I think of her spiritual personality, and that is close to me. I love her, I never forget her, but as to how they buried her, that I don't remember, and it is all the same to me."

Something made Nazhivin remember the death of Socrates. "That would be such happiness," father said, "to die like Socrates. I am not killing myself, but I am ordered to drink poison and I drink it, I cannot disobey. What great happiness!" His voice trembled.

Nazhivin began to speak to him of the injustice of his lot, and father said, "The trouble lies in your exclusive love for your daughter. This is a sin of yours, and a sin of mine, too: our exceptional attitude toward our daughters. If they put my Masha in the ground I feel sorry but if they bury some Matrioshka, it is all the same to me. I must seek to achieve a state where I shall feel as sorry for Matrioshka as I do for my Masha. As in everything, this is the ideal, but the nearer I come to it the better."

On October 12, everything began again. Mother's promises, father's sickness—all were forgotten. Mother begged him to destroy his will, knelt before him, kissed his hands—and told everybody that if father died and left the will as it was, she would find a way to prove his mental deficiency.

When, on the morning of October 17, I came into father's room he showed me, with a bitter smile, a letter from mother. "See what a treat for me—read."

I opened the letter.

Every day you ask me, as though with solicitude, about my health, and

1. Ivan Nazhivin, a writer, was a follower of Tolstoy but later became a monarchist and an orthodox believer.

how I have slept, and every day new blows come which burn my heart out, shorten my life, and torment me unbearably, and yet cannot cut my suffering short. The new blow is this malicious act depriving your numerous descendants of your author's rights! It was the will of fate that I should learn about it, although your accomplice in this matter had *ordered you* to keep it from the family. He threatened to *take his revenge on me* and on the family, and he has carried out this threat excellently, having lured you into giving him that paper with the renunciation of rights. The Government which you and he have denied and abused in every way in all your pamphlets, will, under the law, take the last piece of bread from the mouths of your heirs and give it to Sytin and to different rich printers and swindlers, while Tolstoy's grandchildren, following his vicious and vainglorious desire, will be *dying* of hunger. The same Government, the State Bank, is keeping Tolstoy's diaries from *Tolstoy's wife*. *Christian love* systematically kills by various actions the person who is nearest to you (not in your but in my sense)—your wife, from whom you have seen no *evil acts* at any time, as there are none now, and only the most acute sufferings. Yet, for the present and the future, all kinds of threats hang over me. And so, Liovochka, since it is your custom to go for a walk to pray, pray this time and think well of what you are doing under the pressure of this evildoer. Extinguish hatred, arouse your heart to love and kindness and not to hate and evil acts; forget vanity and pride (concerning the publishing rights); extinguish hatred for me who gave you all of my life and love.

If they have made you think that my motive is greed for money, then I am ready, formally and personally, like daughter Tania, to renounce my rights to my husband's inheritance.² Why do I need it? It is clear that I shall soon leave this life in one way or another; but terror seizes me when I think, if I should survive you, what hate may flare up over your grave in the memory of your children and grandchildren.

Extinguish it, Liovochka, while you are still living, arouse and soften your proud heart, arouse the Lord in it, and the love which you so loudly preach to people.

S. T.

The situation grew worse every day. Hysterics began again, and demands that father should not see Chertkov and should destroy the will. But father had firmly resolved not to give any promises.

"I sacrificed everything to you," mother cried, "you married me, a pure, unblemished, seventeen-year-old child, and you—"

"Yes, yes, I am full of vice, I am vile. But since you have sacrificed everything to me, leave me now, please!"

2. Tania renounced her rights to her husband's inheritance in favor of her six step-children.

Again she began to break into his room, not only during the day but also at night.

"Plotting against me again!" she screamed once, bursting into his bedroom after he had fallen asleep.

"Plotting what? What are you talking about, Sonia?" father asked.

"The diary. Where is the diary? You have given it to Chertkov, have you?"

"I never even thought of it—"

"No, you are lying to me! I felt the brief case, there is no diary in it! Where did you put it?"

"Sasha has it."

She left, and when father dozed off once more, she came in again, waked him and began to apologize for having blamed him wrongly.

A woman representative came from the publishing firm of Prosveshchenie. With the air of a conspirator, mother said that she would find a way to get around father, that she would never stand for his works becoming common property. Finally we understood that the representative from Prosveshchenie had offered mother a million rubles for the publishing rights. When father learned of that, he was alarmed. Chertkov advised him to write a statement to the press, warning publishers against buying his works. The statement was written, but father decided to hold up its publication.

On October 20, Mikhail Petrovich Novikov—a Tula peasant who shared father's ideas—came to see him. As usual, he made a splendid impression on father. "What a wise head, what a wise head!" father kept saying.

When I came for his letters in the drawing-room where he was, he led me to his study, smiling merrily and a little roguishly, and from there to his bedroom.

"Come, come, I shall tell you a great secret! A great secret! You see, this is what I have thought out. I have told Novikov a little about our affairs, about how painful it is for me to stay here. I shall go to stay with him. Nobody will find me there. And you know, Novikov told me his brother's wife is alcoholic; whenever she gets out of all bounds, he just gives her a few straps on the back, and she gets better. It helps!" And father laughed good naturedly. "What contradictions there exist in the world!"

I laughed too and told father that once when coachman Ivan was driving Olga and she asked him how things were at Yasnaia Poliana, he said they were bad, and then turned to her and said:

"And after all, Your Excellency, forgive me if I say it. Among us

village people, if a woman forgets her reason, the husband treats her with the reins. She gets to be like silk!"

Father laughed still more heartily.

"Think of it—what contradictions—"

"But I don't think there's any contradiction," I interrupted him, "only they have rope reins, and we should have moral ones."

"Yes, yes—probably I shall go away just the same," he said again.

On the 24th, father wrote to Novikov:

MIKHAIL PETROVICH:

In connection with the matter I was telling you about before you left, I want to ask of you this favor: if it should really so happen that I came to you, could you find a hut for me in your village? No matter if it is very small, so long as it is separate and warm. In that way, I would embarrass you and your family only for the shortest possible time. I also want to inform you that in case I should have to telegraph you, I would not do so in my own name but in the name of T. Nikolayev.³

I shall await your answer, and I greet you. With friendship.

LEV TOLSTOY

Do not forget that all this should be known to you alone.

On October 25, when I went into father's room, he was sitting in the armchair doing nothing. It was strange to see him without pen and paper, without a book, without even a game of patience.

"I am sitting here and dreaming," he said to me, "dreaming of how I shall go away. You will go with me, in any case, will you not?"

"Yes, but I don't want to embarrass you. It might be better for me not to leave with you at once so as not to be a burden to you. But as to living away from you always—"

"Of course, of course. But are you strong enough? I have been thinking that your coughs and colds will begin again."

"No, no, that is nothing," I exclaimed. "I shall be much better in simple surroundings."

"If so, then the most agreeable, the most natural thing, would be for me to have you near me as my helper. I think we can arrange it this way. We will take a ticket for Moscow. Someone might go to Laptevo⁴ with our things, and then we, too, would get off the train at that station. And if I am found I shall go somewhere else. But then

3. We agreed with our friends on pseudonyms so that our whereabouts should not be discovered: father was to be T. Nikolayev, and I, Frolova.

4. Laptevo is a railway station on the Moscow-Kursk line. M. P. Novikov lived four versts from the station.

all this is probably nothing but dreams, anyway. I'll be in torment if I leave mama—thinking of her condition. But, on the other hand, the surroundings at home are beginning to weigh so heavily on me—it gets more and more painful every day. I confess to you, I am only waiting for some pretext to go."

On the 20th, Seriozha came. Father was glad to have him, and Seriozha, as if feeling all that father suffered, was especially tender and loving to him.

On the same day a telegram came announcing the coming of Andrei. "God help me, God help me!" father whispered. I, too, was afraid of Andrei after his last visit. But Andrei greeted me with the words, "Well, how will my sister receive me?"

"Sister always receives her brothers in the same way," I replied. "Everything depends on the brothers themselves."

I was glad to hear his greeting. Andrei was in splendid spirits and even persuaded mother to make peace with Chertkov.

When father awoke after dinner, I hastened to tell him that Andrei obviously repented of his conduct and was in a good peaceful mood. "Praise be to God," father whispered. And at dinner he asked Andrei questions about his work in the Peasant Bank and they talked quietly, without irritation, as seldom happened between father and his sons.

On October 28, when I came into father's room for work, he gave me a letter.

"Here, take it," he said, "read it and copy it perhaps, if you can read your way through it. It is my letter to mama which I shall leave her if I go away. I am thinking of that more and more. Things are getting to be too hard. Last night, she came and asked me what Chertkov had written me. I said that it was a business letter and contained no secrets, but that, as a matter of principle, I did not wish to give it to her to read. Then reproaches started. These constant suspicions are difficult to bear, and the peering from behind doors, and digging through my papers, and eavesdropping—it's hard. Here the last days—the last hours—of my life are going to waste, when they ought to be used so differently."

When I brought him the copied letter, I said, "Papa, I shall not stay behind alone, I shall leave with you."

"I would ask you to stay with her just at the beginning." He took the letter and put it into his notebook.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE DEPARTURE

ON the evening of October 27, the atmosphere in our house was especially depressing and strained. Mother did not come to tea at first; she was working over some proofs. We were four at table: father, Dushan Petrovich, Varvara Mikhailovna, and I. Father was drinking his tea of dried strawberries. After a while, mother came in. I rose, took my cup, and left the room. Soon Varvara Mikhailovna came to me and said that as soon as I had left, father took his glass of strawberry tea and also went to his room. That night I could not sleep for a long time. It seemed to me as if someone were walking and talking upstairs in father's study. Before dawn there was a knock at the door.

"Who's there?"

"It's I, Lev Nikolayevich. I am going away now—altogether. Come, help me to pack."

"Are you going alone?" I asked with apprehension.

"No, I am taking Dushan Petrovich along."

I was expecting him to leave home—waiting for it every day and every hour—and yet when he said "I am going altogether" I was overcome as if by something new and unexpected. I shall never forget his figure as he stood in the door, a candle in his hand, his face lighted up, beautiful, full of resolve.

When Varvara Mikhailovna and I got upstairs, Dushan Petrovich was already there. He was silent but his great agitation showed in his nervous, flustered manner. I began to help father pack, but my heart jumped, my hands trembled, and I kept doing the wrong thing—hurrying, dropping things on the floor. But father was outwardly quite composed. He was packing something methodically in small boxes, tying them with string. He showed me a heap of manuscripts on the armchair near the desk.

"Here, Sasha, I have taken all my manuscripts out of the drawers. Please take and preserve them. I have written mama that I am giving them to you for safekeeping."

His face had vivid color, his movements were even, no haste could be detected in him, and only his voice, breaking at moments, gave evidence of his emotion.

I carried the manuscripts to my room and asked him if he was taking the diary with him. He said "Yes," and asked me to pack the pencils and pens. I wanted to pack a few medical articles indispensable for his health, but he said they were superfluous. He was taking only the most necessary things with him. It was with great difficulty that I persuaded him to take certain medicaments, an electric flashlight, and a fur coat.

We moved with hardly a sound and all the time restrained one another: "Hush, hush, make no noise!" The doors were shut, and when I asked who shut them, father told me that he had walked up to mother's bedroom softly, hardly touching the floor, and shut her door and the door to the corridor.

"You will stay behind, Sasha," he told me. "I shall call you in a few days, when I decide definitely where I am going. At present, I shall probably go to Mashenka¹ at Shamordino. Tell mama that tonight was the last drop that filled the bucket. Just as I was falling asleep I heard footsteps in my study, looked through the door crack, and saw her going over my papers. I felt such disgust, such loathing. I was lying in bed but could not sleep, my heart was beating so. I counted my pulse, it was 97. And then she came into my room and asked me if I *felt well*. I did not sleep all night and toward morning resolved to go away."

It took us about half an hour to pack. Father began to be nervous and hurried us, but our hands trembled, the straps of the suitcase would not pull together, the suitcase would not close. Father said he could not wait any longer and, putting on his blue undercoat, overshoes, a brown knitted cap and mittens, went to the stable to have the horses harnessed. I went downstairs with him, carrying the things that were ready. Varvara Mikhailovna gathered some provisions for the trip.

We were ready to take the baggage out when suddenly the outside door opened and father came in without his cap.

"What has happened?"

"It's so dark one can't see a thing! I walked along the path, lost it, stumbled against the acacia, fell, lost my cap, hunted for it and couldn't find it, and had to come back. Will you find me another cap, Sasha?"

I ran for a cap and brought two, of which father chose the more modest one. He went out again, taking the flashlight with him. A

1. Maria Nikolayevna Tolstaia, his sister.

few minutes later, we followed him to the stable, lugging the heavy bundles and suitcases on our backs. It was muddy, our feet slipped, we made hardly any headway in the darkness. Then a little blue light flickered near the wing of the house: father was coming to meet us.

"Ah, there you are," he said. "Well, this time I got there all right; they are harnessing already. I shall walk ahead and light the way for you. Oh, why did you give Sasha the heaviest things to carry?" he said to Varvara Mikhailovna reproachfully.

He took the basket case from her hands and carried it, and Varvara Mikhailovna helped me carry the suitcase. Father walked ahead of us, once in awhile pressing the button of his flashlight and instantly letting it go out, which made the darkness seem denser than before. Father was always saving and here, as usual, he was reluctant to use up the battery. Thus we moved ahead, now in complete darkness, now directed by the light of the electric torch. When we reached the stable, the coachman was leading the second horse to the shaft. Father took the bridle and put it on the horse, but his hands were trembling and did not obey him; he could not manage to snap the buckle. At first he hurried the coachman, but afterward sat down on his suitcase in a corner of the carriage barn and was visibly distraught.

"I feel that we'll be overtaken any minute, and then everything will be lost. We shall never be able to leave without a rumpus."

But presently the horses were ready, the coachman put on his coat, Filichka, the groom, jumped into the saddle with a torch.

"Off!"

"Wait, wait, papa," I cried, "let me kiss you!"

"Goodbye, my darling, goodbye! Oh, but we shall meet soon," he said. "Well, let's go now!"

The cabriolet started but instead of passing by the house took the straight road which led through the apple orchard and out to the highway.

It had all happened so quickly, so unexpectedly, that I had had no chance to think over what had passed. And now, standing in the darkness near the stable, I realized for the first time that father had left Yasnaia Poliana, perhaps forever; and that, possibly, I should never see him again.

It was about five o'clock in the morning when Varvara Mikhailovna and I went back to the house. With a violently beating heart I went to my room and sat there, watching the clock, until eight. Then I drew a free breath; the train which father was to take must have left by then. I went to speak to Ilya Vasilievich.

"Where is Lev Nikolayevich?" I asked him.

Ilya Vasilievich looked down and said nothing.

"You know that Lev Nikolayevich has left for good?"

"I know, he told me that he wished to go away, and now I understand, his coat being gone, that he is not at home."

Gradually the news of father's departure spread in the house. Most of the servants kept still, not daring to express their opinion; only old niania lamented aloud, and, although she pitied the Countess, said that it was her fault.

The coachman who had taken father to the station brought back a note for me:

We reached here safely. Shall probably go to Optina. Read my mail. Tell Chertkov that if, during the week—until the 4th—there is no letter from me, he is to send the "statement" to the newspapers. Please, dearest, as soon as you learn where I am—and that will be very soon now—let me know about everything—how the news of my departure was received, and everything; the more details the better.

Shchokino, October 28.

I waited in a terrible state of agitation until eleven o'clock. It was very hard to have to tell mother of father's departure. Presently I heard steps in the bedroom. I went into the drawing-room, and in a few minutes my mother ran in precipitately.

"Where is papa?" she asked in a frightened voice.

"Father has gone!"

"Where?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know? Has he left for good?"

"He left a letter for you. Here it is."

She seized the letter. Her eyes ran quickly along the lines. He had written:

Four o'clock in the morning, October 28, 1910.

My departure will distress you. I regret it; but please understand and believe that I cannot act differently. My position in the house has become unbearable. Apart from everything else, I can no longer live in these conditions of luxury in which I have been living, and I am doing what old men of my age commonly do: leaving the worldly life to spend the last days of my life in peace and solitude.

Please understand this and do not follow me if you learn where I am.

Your coming would only hurt your position and my own and would not alter my decision.

I thank you for your faithful forty-eight years of life with me and beg you to forgive me for any wrong I have done you, as I forgive you with all my soul for any wrong you may have done me. I advise you to resign yourself to the new position in which my departure places you and not to harbor ill feeling against me. If you wish to let me know anything, tell it to Sasha; she will know where I am and will send me whatever is necessary. As to saying where I am, that she cannot do, as I have taken her word that she will not tell anyone.

LEV TOLSTOY

I charge Sasha with collecting my things and manuscripts and sending them to me.

"He has left! Left for good!" mother screamed. "Farewell, I cannot live without him any longer! I shall drown myself!"

She threw the letter to the floor and ran out. I called Bulgakov, who had just come from the Chertkovs, and asked him to help me keep track of mother. Bulgakov instantly ran after her. She was running down the lane, just as she was, without overshoes or wrap, on and on toward the pond. I watched her from the drawing-room window. Presently I saw her go near the pond. As quickly as I could, I ran downstairs. At that moment, mother noticed Bulgakov following her, and she turned in another direction. I ran to cut her off, overtook Bulgakov, and caught up with her just as she reached the pond. She was running out on the landing where we usually rinsed the wash, but she slipped and fell on her back. I jumped toward her but she rolled over and fell into the water. I had not grabbed her in time. She began to sink; Bulgakov and I jumped in after her. Standing up to my chest in water, I pulled her out, and Bulgakov and Vania, the waiter, who had come to our aid, lifted her up and carried her back. They grasped her under each arm and led her to the house. "Sasha!" mother exclaimed. "Telegraph father at once that I was going to drown myself!" I did not answer. Quick running, cold water, and all the excitement had left me exhausted—I was scarcely able to move.

I changed my clothes and again went upstairs. I walked back and forth in the rooms, not knowing what to do. Suddenly I saw mother, clad only in her dressing gown, again running down the lane to the pond. I called to Bulgakov and Vania, who again ran after her and led her home by force. And so it continued throughout a day which seemed to me like an endless nightmare. Mother wept unceasingly, beat her chest with a heavy paper weight or a hammer, stuck herself

with knives and scissors and pins. When I took these objects away, she attempted to throw herself out of the window and once she tried to jump down the well.

I decided to watch her day and night until the other members of the family, to whom I had at once sent urgent telegrams, could arrive. Brother Andrei was at Krapivna in the province of Tula and could come the same day. I also sent to Tula for a physician who was a specialist in nervous disorders.

Several times during the day, mother begged me to tell her where father had gone; and seeing that she could get nothing out of me, sent someone to the station to find out the destination to which the tickets had been bought. When she learned that they had been bought for train No. 9, she sent a telegram to father, "Return immediately, Sasha." Vania, whom she sent out to dispatch this message, came to me, embarrassed, and gave me the telegram, not knowing whether to carry out mother's order. I did not detain the telegram, but simultaneously sent another one: "Don't worry, only telegrams signed Alexandra are genuine." Later I learned that neither of these telegrams was received. Father had changed trains.

In the evening, brother Andrei came, and, one hour later, the doctor from Tula. The doctor at once went up to mother, talked with her a long time, diagnosed hysteria but found no signs of actual insanity. Nevertheless, he warned us there was a possibility of suicide.

"We know of cases when hysterical women, wishing merely to frighten their people, unintentionally kill themselves," he said and asked that mother be constantly and carefully watched.

At night, old lady Schmidt and Bulgakov stayed at mother's side. I got up several times to find out how things stood. All night mother walked from one room to another, sometimes sobbing aloud and sometimes quieting down. She made no more attempts to end her life.

"I shall find him, I shall run away. How can you prevent me? I shall climb out a window and walk to the station. What can you do to me? Ah, if only I can learn where he is! Then I'll not let him escape any more, I'll watch him day and night. I'll sleep at his door."

On the evening of October 28, I received a telegram sent to Chertkov's address: "Staying overnight at Optina, tomorrow Shamordino. Address Podborki. Am well, Nikolayev."

Mother's condition showed no improvement on the next day. At times she sobbed hysterically, exclaiming, "Liovochka, Liovochka! What have you done to me? Liovochka, my precious, come back!" At other times, she reproached father, spoke angrily against him, and

somehow at such times it seemed to me that she was not going to do anything to herself.

Tania came, and all my brothers except Liova, who was abroad. In the evening, they gathered in my room and had a conference as to what should be done. With the exception of the eldest brother, Sergei, all were of the opinion that father should come back. One of my brothers said in sharp tones that father, who preached Christianity all his life, had in this case committed a hateful, unchristian act: instead of forgiving mother and being forbearing with her, he had left her. The others supported this opinion. And when I spoke against it, he said: "You mean to say, Sasha, that father's leaving mother, who is sick, is a Christian act? No, live with her, have patience with her, be tender to her—that is true Christianity." He stressed the word "Christianity."

"Father would have been more consistent if he had stayed with mother," Tania said.

"But what are we to do now?" asked Misha. "You know mother cannot be left alone."

"Yes," said Andrei. "But I cannot hang around here, I have my job."

"So have I," said Ilya.

"And I have Tanichka and Mikhail Sergeyevich to take care of," said Tania. "And you, Sasha, you will probably leave and join father?"

"Yes. I consider that my duty to mother is done."

And I reminded them of the many, many times during these last five months of uninterrupted suffering that I had begged them to help, to separate our parents at least for a time, to place mother in a sanatorium—yet every time they had hastened away, one to his family, another to his job; and now, when father had left, instead of rejoicing because he had finally wrenched himself free from his sufferings, they reproached him and thought of nothing but making him come back and resume his yoke.

"Your only reason for wishing him to do it is that you want to shift the burden back again to the shoulders of an eighty-two-year-old man!" I said.

I felt very bitter; I knew that I could expect no great support from the family. Brother Seriozha alone said, "Sasha is right. I would not want father to come back, and I shall write him about it this very day." And he wrote father a short but kind letter in which he expressed the opinion that father's mistake had been in not leaving mother twenty-six years ago. He said that he understood father and

did not blame him for what he had done, and that father must not reproach himself, whatever the consequences of his departure.

All the members of the family wrote asking father to return home. Mother wrote as follows:

October 28, 1910.

LIOVOCHKA DEAREST:

Come home, dear, and save me from a second attempt at suicide. Liovochka, friend of my whole life, I will do anything, anything you wish; I will renounce all kinds of luxury, I will be friendly with your friends, I will cure myself, I will be kind; dear, come back, you must *save* me, even the Gospel says you can never, under *any* circumstances, leave your wife. My loved one, friend of my soul, save me, come back, come back if only to say farewell to me before we part forever.

Where are you? Where? Are you well? Liovochka, do not make me suffer, dearest; I will serve you lovingly with all my being and my soul; return to me, return for God's sake, for the love of God about whom you speak so much, and I will give you such a humble, self-denying love—I promise faithfully and earnestly, beloved—and we will settle everything amicably; let us go anywhere you wish, let us live as you wish.

Well, farewell, farewell perhaps forever.

YOUR SONIA

Is it possible that you have left me *forever*? I shall not outlive this misfortune, you will kill me. Save yourself from this sin, dear, for you cannot be calm and happy if you kill me.

Liovochka, my darling, do not try to conceal your residence from me but let me come and see you, my dear. I promise not to upset you, I will be humble and loving with you.

All my children are here, but they cannot help me with their self-confident despotism. There is only one thing I need—your love, and I *must* see you. Let me say farewell to you, my friend, let me tell you for the last time how I love you. Call me or come back to me. Farewell, Liovochka, I am calling and seeking for you all the time. What awful suffering for my soul.

On the night of October 29, Varvara Mikhailovna and I left. We went by way of Tula, Kaluga, and Sukhinichi to Kozelsk. There we hired two carriages, one for ourselves, the other for our baggage, and drove to Shamordino. The road was in a frightful condition, it was dark and miry, the horses crawled along. We rode for two and a half hours, and then there were lights before us. I felt worried: what if we missed father at Shamordino, what if he should be gone, no one knows where? We drove up to the convent inn.

"Who is staying with you?" I asked the aged, dignified nun who came out to meet us.

"Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy," she replied, not without pride.

"Is he in his room?"

"No, he is with his sister, Maria Nikolayevna."

Without taking off my wraps, I asked the nun to show me to Aunt Masha's. We went through a large monastery courtyard, past a church and some other buildings, and finally the nun pointed to a tiny house. I knocked. A young neophyte opened it.

"Whom do you want?"

"Oh, let me in!" I said, my agitation increasing every moment. "Let me in, I'm Maria Nikolayevna's niece."

"Oh, yes, please come in."

I stepped quietly into the house, walked through one room, then another—everything was still. I called Aunt Masha. She replied in a frightened voice: "Who is it—who?"

"I, Sasha. Where is papa?"

"Oh, is that you!" She was lying down on her bed. We embraced and kissed each other heartily. "Papa just went out."

"Is he well?"

"Yes, he's well."

"Praise be to God. Then I'll sit here with you a little," I said to her, "and after that we'll go to him at the inn."

"But how could you have missed each other? He only just stepped out of here!" As it came out later, Dushan Petrovich had led father out by a short cut so that we had not met.

Aunt Masha's daughter, Liza Obolenskaia, who was visiting her mother, came in. They were both very excited, asked me questions and, in turn, told of their painful impressions of father's state. After talking with them I intended to go out when suddenly the door opened and father and I met face to face. He kissed me and asked at once:

"Well, how are things over there?"

"Everything is all right now, the brothers are there and Tania, and mama has quieted down some," said I. "I have brought you letters."

"Give them to me."

He sat down at the table and began reading attentively. Varvara Mikhailovna came in. Aunt Masha and Elizaveta Valerianovna began to ask her questions about Yasnaia Poliana. Varvara Mikhailovna answered in a whisper, fearing to interfere with father's reading, but

he said to her, "Please speak aloud, you don't interfere with me at all; on the contrary, it is very interesting."

"Yes," he said pensively, when he finished reading, "however great my fear, I cannot go back. No, I am not going back!" he repeated in a decided tone. "A very good letter from Seriozha: brief and kind and wise. I am grateful to him. Well, now tell me everything in detail."

I began telling him of all that had passed: how mother received the news of his departure, what she said, who was with her, what the doctor's opinion was.

"So you say that the doctor did not find her insane?" he asked me.

"No, he did not."

"But then—what do they know?" he said and waved his hand. "I wrote you, but probably there was no time for the letter to reach you. I wanted you to tell Tania and Seriozha that it is unthinkable for me to go back to her."

I shall quote here in full two letters from father which he had already sent off and which I received later at Astapovo.

October 28, 1910, Station Kozelsk.

We have reached here, dearest Sasha, safely—if only things are not going too badly with you! It is half-past seven now. We shall stay overnight and go on tomorrow, i[if] I l[ive], to Shamordino. I try to keep my composure and must confess that I feel the same unrest as always before the difficult future; but I do not feel the shame, the awkwardness, the lack of freedom which I always felt at home. From Gorbachevo on, we had to go third class; it was very uncomfortable, but spiritually very agreeable and instructive. I have been eating well on the way, and now at Belev² we are going to have tea and go to sleep—try to sleep. I am hardly tired—even less than usual. Concerning yourself, I am deciding nothing until I hear from you. Write to Shamordino and send the telegrams there, too, if there should be something extraordinary. Tell Batia³ [Chertkov] to write to me, that I have read what he marked off in his article, but did it in a hurry and would like to read it over again—let him send it on. Tell Varia that I thank her, as always, for her love for you and hope that she will take care of you and check you in your impulses. Please, my darling, say little but be kind and firm.

Please send me the ink dropper (I have the ink) and the books which

2. A small town in Tula province.

3. "Batia" means "father" and is used among the peasants in some provinces. Dima Chertkov called his father "Batia"; hence the nickname.

I had begun reading—Montaigne and Nikolayev's second volume.⁴ Read my letters and send along to Podborki, Shamordino, those that I must have.

Tell V. G. [Chertkov] that I feel great joy and fear over what I have done. I shall try to write down the subjects of dreams and of the artistic things that will out. For the time being, I consider it best to refrain from seeing him. He will, as always, understand me. Goodbye, my love. I kiss you, even if your nose is running.⁵

Also send small scissors, pencils, bathrobe.

The other letter read:

October 29, 1910, Optina Monastery.

Sergeyenko will tell everything about me, dear friend Sasha. It is hard. I cannot help feeling a great burden. The chief thing is not to sin and therein is the difficulty. Of course, I have sinned and shall sin but if it were only not so much! This is the chief thing, before all else, and I wish it for you also—the more so as I know that a fearful task, one that is beyond your young strength, has fallen to your lot.

I have decided nothing and want to decide nothing. Am trying to do only what I cannot help doing and not to do what I can avoid doing. From my letter to Chertkov you will see how I—I will not say look at it—but feel about it. Am trusting greatly in the good influence of Tania and Seriozha. The principal thing is that they should understand and try to explain to her [mother] that to me—with this peering, eavesdropping, everlasting reproaches, ordering me about as she pleases, eternal controlling, feigned hatred for the man who is nearest and most necessary to me, and evident hatred for me under a pretense of love—life is not just disagreeable but plainly impossible; that if anyone should drown himself, it is not she but I, and that I desire only one thing: freedom from her, from this falsehood, pretense, and hate, with which her entire being is permeated.

Of course, they cannot explain this to her, but they could explain that all her acts not only express no love for me but seem to have an obvious purpose of killing me, which is something she is going to achieve, for I hope that this third attack which threatens me will deliver her and myself from this terrible situation in which we have been living and to which I do not want to return.

You see, dear, how bad I am. I am not pretending to you. I am not asking you to come yet, but shall do so as soon as that is possible—and very soon. Write me how you are. I kiss you.

L. TOLSTOY

We are going to Shamordino. Dushan is doing everything to take care of me, and physically I feel wonderful.

4. P. P. Nikolayev, *Idea of God as the Perfect Foundation of Life*.

5. I had a bad cold at that time.

As it was utterly impossible for father to return to *Yasnaia Poliana*, it was especially distressing for him to receive the letters from the family which expressed their displeasure at his having left mother.

"I cannot return, and I shall not return to her," he kept saying. "I wanted to stay here, and I even went about looking for a hut to rent; but then, there is no use guessing about the future."

He seemed to me ill and troubled. It was obvious that my stories and the letters oppressed him. He understood that his whereabouts, if not discovered yet, were likely to be discovered any day and that he would not be left in peace. So it was that we sat at Aunt Masha's and drank tea in an anxious and fearful mood.

"Could you possibly regret what you have done or accuse yourself if anything happened?" I asked.

"Of course not," he said. "How can a man regret something when he could not possibly have acted differently? But if something happens to her it will be a very, very great pain to me."

Auntie understood father and sympathized with him deeply.

"Let *Liovochka* go away. If *Sonia* comes, I shall speak with her," she declared firmly.

Father stayed for a short while after that, then rose, took leave of Aunt Masha and prepared to go out.

"*Liovochka*, you will not leave tomorrow without saying goodbye to me?" Aunt Masha asked.

"No, no, the morning is wiser than the evening," said father, "we shall see it all tomorrow."

"Please do not go without taking leave of me," auntie begged again.

"No, no, everything must be thought over," father said, obviously thinking of something else, and went to the inn.

Aunt Masha took Dushan Petrovich and me aside and asked us, in case Lev Nikolayevich should decide to go in the morning, to be sure and send word to her, regardless of the hour. We promised and went with father to the inn. Elizaveta Valerianovna Obolensky went with us.

When he reached his room, father said that he wished to stay alone. It was stuffy. He opened the window and sat down at the table to write letters. We went to Dushan Petrovich's room, took out a railway guide and map and began to talk over our possible itinerary, to provide for all contingencies, as I felt that the news which I had brought upset father to such an extent that he might pick up his things and leave any minute. Also the open window in his room worried me. Twice I entered, asking him if he would not allow me to



Winter riding



Tolstoy and his sister Maria Nikolayevna

close it. "No, I am hot, leave it," he replied each time. He was writing something, and I could see that my coming disturbed the course of his thoughts. In a little while, I asked Dushan Petrovich to go to him, but father asked to be left alone. In half an hour, he came to us carrying a letter in his hand.

"I have written to mother," father said, "have it sent with the next mail."

He had written as follows:

October 31, 1910.

An interview between us, and still more my coming back at present, is entirely impossible. To you it would be, as everyone says, extremely harmful; and to me it would be terrible because my position, owing to your excitement, irritation, and ill health, would be still worse, if such a thing were possible. I advise you to resign yourself to what has happened, to settle down in your new situation, and what is most important, to take care of your health. If you—I do not say love me—at least do not hate me, you must understand my position, if only a little. If you do so, you will not condemn me but will try to help me find peace and the possibility of leading some kind of a human life—help me by controlling yourself; and then you will no longer wish me to come back. As to your present mood, your desire for and attempts at suicide—these show more than anything else that you have lost control of yourself, and make my return unthinkable. No one but you can save all those near you, me, and, above all, yourself, from such sufferings as we have endured in the past. Try to direct your whole energy not to securing all that you desire—at present my return—but to bringing peace to your soul; and you will then obtain what you wish.

I have spent two days at Shamordino and Optina Monastery and am leaving. I will mail this letter on the way. I am not saying where I go, as I believe that separation is indispensable for you and for me. Do not think that I have gone because I do not love you. I love you and pity you with all my heart—but cannot do otherwise than I am doing. Your letter, I know, was written in all sincerity, but you are not capable of doing what you would wish to. And what matters is not the fulfillment of any wishes or demands of mine but only your equanimity, and calm, rational attitude toward life. And as long as these are lacking, life with you is unthinkable to me. To return to you while you are in such a state would mean, for me, to renounce life. And I do not consider that I have the right to do so.

Farewell, dear Sonia. God help you. Life is no jesting matter, and we have no right to abandon it of our own will. And to measure it by length of time is also unreasonable. Perhaps those months which remain to us are more important than all the years we have lived, and they must be lived well.

L. T.

We were sitting at the table and looking at the map spread before us. The window was open. I wanted to close it.

"Leave it," father said. "It's hot. What is it you are looking at?"

"The map," said Dushan Petrovich. "If we go, we must know where."

"Well, show me."

And bending over the table, we began to hold council as to where to go. Taking advantage of this, I shut the window imperceptibly with one hand. Father was hot and could easily take cold.

We planned to go south as far as Novocherkask, to stop there with Elena Sergeyevna Denisenko, my cousin, try to obtain foreign passports—with the help of her husband—and, if possible, go to Bulgaria. If this proved impossible, then we would go to the Caucasus to join father's followers.

Talking in this way, we did not notice how we were carried away by our schemes and how warmly we were discussing them. "Well, that will do," said father, rising from the table. "It is not necessary to make any plans, we'll see tomorrow." He suddenly felt displeased at having been tempted into building plans for the future and forgetting his favorite rule: to live in the present only.

"I am hungry," he said, "isn't there something for me to eat?"

Varvara Mikhailovna and I had brought along rolled oats, dried mushrooms, eggs, and an alcohol lamp, and we quickly made some oatmeal gruel for him. He ate with appetite, praising our cooking. Of our departure nothing more was said. Father only sighed heavily several times and to my inquiring glance said, "My mind is heavy." I felt grieved as I looked at him: he was so sad and upset. He spoke little and went to bed early. We went to our rooms as soon as he did and slept like the dead, as we had been greatly tired by our journey.

About four o'clock in the morning, I heard someone knock at our door. I jumped up and opened it. Before me stood father—just as he had stood a few days before—with a candle in his hand. He was all dressed.

"Dress quickly, we are going right away," he said. "I have already begun to pack my things, come and help me."

He had slept badly, the thought that his refuge would be discovered tormented him. At four o'clock he had aroused Dushan Petrovich and sent for the coachman whom we had reserved for all eventualities and who was staying overnight at the village. He did not forget to order horses for us, too, and sent the monastery servant to get a local coachman for us.

Remembering my promise to Aunt Masha, I instantly sent for her. It was still dark. By the light of a candle, I hastily gathered our things and strapped the suitcases. Dushan Petrovich came in. The Kozelsk coachmen had brought the horses, but our coachman from the village was not yet there. I asked father to go ahead without waiting for us. He was very restless, sent to the village several times after our horses, but finally decided to go without waiting for Aunt Masha and Elizaveta Valerianovna Obolensky, to whom he wrote the following letter:

Shamordino Monastery. October 31, 1910, 4 o'clock in the morning.

DEAR FRIENDS MASHENKA AND LIZANKA:

Do not wonder and do not condemn us, and me, for leaving without saying goodbye to you as we should. I cannot express to you both, and especially to you, my dear Mashenka, my gratitude for your love and your help in my ordeal. I cannot remember a time, although I have always loved you, when I felt such tenderness for you as I have felt these days and as I carry with me. We are leaving thus unexpectedly because I fear that Sofia Andreyevna will overtake me here. And there is only one train, between seven and eight o'clock. Forgive me if I carry away your little books and the *Cycle of Reading*. I am writing to Chertkov to send you a *Cycle of Reading* and *Readings for Every Day*. And the little books I shall return to you. I kiss you, dear friends, and I love you with such joy.

L. T.

About ten minutes after father's departure with Dushan Petrovich, Aunt Masha drove up.

"Where is Liouchka?"

"He has left."

"Oh, my Lord, my Lord, and we did not say farewell to each other! Well, there is nothing to do, nothing to do—just so all goes well with him!"

She sat down on the bench by the steps. All were silent. "Let Sonia come here, I shall know how to meet her," Aunt Masha said with a sigh. She was very sad but firm in spirit and was only concerned about father's good.

Meanwhile, the horses from the village were still delayed. Varvara Mikhailovna and I were greatly upset and had lost almost all hope of catching the train. Presently the coachman walked up, without the horses.

"Where are the horses?"

"But, lady, my carriage got broken."

"Oh, Lord, Lord, what shall we do?"

Two hours remained until train time, there were fifteen versts of a terribly bad road between us and the station.

"What have you? A cart?"

"Sure I have a cart and a buggy, too, only without springs."

"Oh, it's all the same thing—only be quick and harness up, that's a good fellow. Hurry, for God's sake, hurry!"

I don't know whether the man understood my feelings or noticed my despair, but fifteen minutes had not passed when a pair of shaggy, small, well-fed horses stood at the steps. The little peasant urged them on all the way. When they were covered with foam, he no longer whipped them but only encouraged them with pity and despair in his voice:

"Go on, dearies, get along, go on. Please go on."

As we were nearing Kozelsk, we saw our two carriages ahead and the train already pulling up to the station. We boarded it without tickets, barely managing to haul in our baggage before it started. Father was as agitated as before.

"If you had been late, I would not have left without you but would have waited at Kozelsk in a hotel," he said to me.

In the coach, curious people came every now and then to sit in our compartment, accosting Varvara Mikhailovna or Dushan Petrovich or me. "Who is with you? Is it Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy? Where is he going?" There was another passenger in the closed compartment to which we were later transferred. He recognized father at once and began to talk with him. I took him aside and asked him please not to disturb father, as he was very tired. "Yes—I know, pardon me." In a few minutes he picked up his things and took a seat in the open part of the car, leaving the entire compartment at our disposal. "You see, I know a good deal about it from the papers," he said to me, "I am a true admirer of Lev Nikolayevich. Use my help as suits you best. If Lev Nikolayevich would consent, I'd offer him my house at Belev. No one would disturb him there."

Father was reclining. To our question as to how he felt, he answered that he was tired but otherwise well. He asked for a paper. At the next large station, I bought him several papers. He read them and was chagrined. "Everything is known already, the papers are full of my departure," he said.

He asked me to cover him with a steamer rug and said that he would try to go to sleep. I went out into the common section. All the passengers were reading the papers, and the conversation turned on

the departure of Tolstoy from Yasnaia Poliana. Opposite me sat two young men dressed with commonplace elegance, with cigarettes between their teeth.

"A neat trick the old man played," one of them said. "I bet Sofia Andreyevna didn't like it too well," and he laughed stupidly. "Picked up in the night and ran away!"

"There you are, after she had taken care of him all her life," the other one said. "Maybe her care wasn't so sweet to him."

But soon they learned that Tolstoy was in the next compartment and, looking at us confusedly, they kept still. The news of Tolstoy's traveling in the same train spread to all the cars. Several times, persons were going to burst into father's compartment, but I turned them sharply away and, as far as possible, protected him from the curious.

Soon the conductors and many of the travelers began to take my side. "Why do you pester me?" one of the conductors, a gray-haired man with a wise face, said to a passenger. "Why in the world do you bother me about it? Didn't I tell you Tolstoy had left the train at the station before the last?"

When father woke up, he asked for something to eat. I asked the conductors to show me some place where I might cook oatmeal gruel on my alcohol lamp. They took me to their service quarters, where about five conductors were sitting. They helped me with whatever they could, asked questions, sympathized. The gruel came out very well, father ate with great relish, and finished all of it. Then he fell asleep.

CHAPTER XXX

ILLNESS AND DEATH

TOWARD four o'clock, on October 31, father called me and asked me to cover him up as he was feeling chilly.

"Tuck it in around the back nicely, my back feels very cold."

We were not much alarmed, as it was chilly in the car; all felt cold and hugged their wraps. We covered father with his coat, with a steamer rug, with his woolen cloak, but he felt more chilly all the time. Dushan Petrovich took his temperature. The thermometer registered 100.6°.

Never had I felt so alarmed. My legs gave way under me. I sat down on father's car seat and involuntarily began to repeat under my breath: "Lord, help, save, help. . . ." Father understood my state of mind, stretched out his hand, vigorously pressed mine, and said, "Don't lose heart, Sasha, all is well, very well."

At Gorbachevo, I went out on the platform. A man with eyeglasses was asking the conductor if Tolstoy was there and when told that he was, boarded the train. Besides this, all during our journey a man with a red moustache walked up and down the aisle of our car. For some reason, his face attracted our attention. We soon noticed that he changed his clothes: sometimes he appeared as a railway employee, then again in civilian clothes. One of the conductors informed me, with a mysterious air, that this man, upon learning that Tolstoy was on the train, telegraphed something to the Tula governor from Gorbachevo station. I realized that we were being watched by police.

Meanwhile, father's fever went on increasing. We brewed tea and gave him some with red wine, but it did not help, the chills kept on. I cannot describe the state of terror which gripped us. For the first time, I realized that we had no shelter—no home. A second-class carriage filled with tobacco smoke, strange people around us—and not a spot on earth where we could take refuge with a sick, aged man.

We passed Dankov and approached some large station. It was Astapovo. Dushan Petrovich ran out and in fifteen minutes came back with a man in railway uniform. It was the station master. He promised to give us a room in his apartment where the patient could lie down, and we decided to stay there. Father rose, we dressed him, and he stepped out of the car supported by Dushan Petrovich and

the station master, while Varvara Mikhailovna and I gathered up the things.

When we reached the station, we found father sitting on a divan in the ladies' room, in his brown overcoat, with his cane in his hand. He shivered from head to foot and his lips moved feebly. I suggested that he lie down on the sofa, but he refused. The door from the ladies' room into the waiting-room was closed and a throng of curious persons stood behind it, waiting for Tolstoy to pass. One woman after another came in, begged our pardon, tidied her coiffure and hat before the mirror and went out.

Dushan Petrovich, Varvara Mikhailovna, and the station master went out to prepare the room. Father and I sat and waited. Soon they came for us. Again father was supported on both sides and led out. When we passed through the crowd which had gathered in the waiting-room, all the men took off their hats; father returned every greeting. I saw how difficult it was for him to walk: every now and then he swayed on his feet and fairly hung on the arms of those who led him.

We found a bed with a spring mattress¹ in the drawing-room of the station master's apartment, and Varvara Mikhailovna and I began to make the bed. Father sat down in his overcoat but was as chilly as before. When the bed was ready, we asked him to undress and lie down, but he refused, saying that he could not do so until everything was made ready for the night in the usual way. As soon as he started speaking, I understood that one of his fainting spells was setting in. It was clear that he believed himself at home and wondered why everything was not as he was accustomed to have it.

"I cannot lie down. Fix everything as usual. Put the night table and the chair next to the bed."

But when everything was done, he asked that we put on the table a candle, matches, notebook, the little lantern—everything as at home. We did so and again begged him to lie down, but he kept refusing. We understood then that his condition was very grave; that he might lapse into unconsciousness at any moment. Dushan Petrovich, Varvara Mikhailovna, and I began to undress him, little by little, without asking him to do anything; and we almost carried him to bed.

I sat down at his bedside, and fifteen minutes had hardly passed when I noticed that his left arm and left leg began to twitch convulsively. At times, I could see the same twitching on the left side of his

1. In Russia, many beds have no spring mattresses.

face. We asked the station master to send for the station doctor to assist Dushan Petrovich. We gave father some strong wine, made an enema. He said nothing, only moaned; his face was pale, and convulsions, although not violent, persisted. Toward nine o'clock, he became better. His breathing was even and calm. He moaned softly.

The station doctor, himself a sick man, could not help us any; still his presence was a relief to Dushan Petrovich. The doctor's wife came along with him, however, and she was a burden: wanted to stay in the sick room, insisted on giving advice, asked questions, and was in everybody's way.

Father woke up fully conscious. Calling me to his bedside, he smiled and asked solicitously, "How is it, Sasha?"

"Well, not very good." Tears were in my eyes and voice.

"Don't lose heart—what could be better? Are we not together?"

By night time, he felt stronger. We took his temperature—it had decreased quickly, and that night he slept well. None of us undressed, and we took turns sitting at his bedside, observing his every motion. In the middle of the night, he called me and said, "What do you think—can we go on tomorrow?" I replied that, in my opinion, we could not, that at best we must wait another day. He sighed heavily and said nothing.

"Ah, why do you sit by me? You should go to sleep!" he said to us several times during the course of that night. Sometimes he spoke in his sleep: "To run away—to run away—they'll overtake . . ." He asked us not to inform the newspapers about his sickness and, in general, to tell no one anything about him. I tried to calm him.

The next day, the first of November, after taking his temperature, we all revived: the thermometer showed 98.2°. Father's mood was fairly cheerful. All the time he spoke of the necessity for continuing our journey. He was greatly worried by the thought that his whereabouts might be discovered, and called me and dictated the following telegram to Chertkov: "Yesterday fell ill, passengers saw leaving train in weak condition, afraid publicity; now better, going on, take measures, advise."

Taking advantage of father's improved condition, I resolved to ask him about the thing which it was indispensable for me to know if his illness proved dangerous and long. I felt an immense responsibility resting on me, for I had promised, when I left Yasnaia Poliana, to inform the family in case of father's illness. Father became greatly alarmed and several times urgently begged me in no case to let the family know of his whereabouts and his illness. "I should like to see

Chertkov," he added. I at once telegraphed to Chertkov: "Yesterday left train Astapovo, high temperature, unconscious, morning normal temperature, now chills again. Traveling unthinkable, expressed desire to see you. Frolova." In a few hours I received Chertkov's reply that he would be at Astapovo the next morning.

That morning, father dictated to me the following thoughts for his notebook: "God is the unlimited all, man is only the limited expression of God." I wrote it down and waited for him to go on. "Nothing more," he said. For a while he rested silently as if thinking, then called me. "Take notebook and pen and write:

" . . . or else, better still, this way: God is the unlimited all, of which man understands himself to be a limited part. God alone exists truly. Man is his expression in matter, time, and space. The more God's expression in man (life) unites with the expressions (lives) of other beings, the more that man exists. This union of one's life with the lives of other beings is achieved through love.

"God is not love, but the more love, the more man expresses God, and the more truly he exists.

"We recognize God only through consciousness of His expression in us. All deductions from this consciousness, and the guidance of life based on it, always entirely satisfy man in his knowledge of God, and in the guidance of his life based on this consciousness."

After a time he again called me and said, "Now I wish to write to Tania and Seriozha." Obviously, he was upset by the thought that he had asked me not to call them by wire, and he wished to explain to them the reason why he could not make up his mind to see them. Several times he had to stop dictating because of the sobs that rose in his throat, and, at some moments, I could scarcely hear his voice, so very softly did he speak. I took the letter down in shorthand, then typed it, and brought it for him to sign.

November 1, 1910, Astapovo.

DEAR CHILDREN OF MINE, TANIA AND SERIOZHA:

I hope and trust that you will not reproach me for not calling you. To call you alone, without mama, would be a great affliction to her, and also to the other brothers. You both will understand that Chertkov, whom I did call, is in an exceptional position with regard to me. He has devoted his life to the service of the cause which I have served the last forty years of my life. This cause is not so much dear to me as I consider it—whether mistakenly or not—of importance for all people, yourselves included.

Thank you for your goodness to me. I do not know whether I am taking leave of you or not, but I have felt the necessity of saying to you what I say here.

Also I wanted to add advice for you, Seriozha, that you should think of your life, of who you are, what you are, wherein is the meaning of human life and how every sensible, reasoning man should spend it. Those Darwinian views of evolution and the struggle for survival which you have adopted will not explain to you the meaning of your life and will not give you guidance in your acts; and life without an explanation of its meaning and importance and without the unfailing guidance which comes from that, is a pitiful existence. Think of that. Loving you, and probably on the eve of death, I say this to you.

Farewell. Try to calm mother, for whom I feel the most sincere compassion and love.

Your loving father,
LEV TOLSTOY

"Give this to them after my death," he said and cried.

At nine o'clock, chills began again, and the fever rose. He moaned a great deal, tossed in bed, complained of headache. By four o'clock his temperature was already 101.8°. The railway physician came several times, but he inspired little confidence and, what was worse, he always came with his tedious and tactless wife. Finally, we began to try to discourage his visits.

The station chief, Ivan Ivanovich Ozolin—a most lovable man—helped us all the time between his duties. The Ozolins placed their three little children in a tiny room, which, however, did not seem to disturb them greatly. We heard their merry voices and laughter, and the youngest little girl often sang in a full, true voice. I listened to this cheerful, naïve melody, and my sadness grew, so great was the contrast between these carefree, joyous sounds and our gloomy, depressed mood.

That day father called for Ivan Ivanovich Ozolin and his wife, thanked them for their hospitality and asked about the children—how many there were and their ages. The Ozolins left the room with lighted, deeply moved faces.

In the evening, an accident happened which might have had very bad consequences. We noticed a smell of smoke in the room, and our heads ached. When Varvara Mikhailovna looked into the stove, she saw a large chunk of wood smoldering there, which the girl who served us had put in to dry for kindling. The damper had been closed. *We instantly opened the damper and the little window in the neigh-*

boring room and even in father's room, first screening off his bed and covering him up, head and all.

When Dushan Petrovich, with the station physician, examined father, he found the lungs were wheezing. We were also alarmed by his cough and the rusty-colored, bloody discharges. Pneumonia had set in. We held council and decided to telegraph brother Sergei, asking him to call Doctor Nikitin from Moscow. It was very hard to decide on this step; I had promised father not to call anyone. Yet I could not take upon myself the responsibility of declining to call a good, competent physician. After many hesitations, I sent brother Sergei an urgent telegram.

Later in the evening, father's temperature decreased a little, going down to 99.1° ; but he moaned and constantly asked for something to drink. He was evidently in a very depressed state of mind.

The night of November 1, the fever rose and toward five o'clock on November 2 reached 102.4° . His heart was weak, his pulse was 90 and erratic, respiration 38 to 40. A great thirst tormented him relentlessly. He asked for a cup of tea with lemon, drank it with great pleasure and said, "That's good. Maybe this will make it easier." I was giving it to him from a little spoon, and he asked me to bring him a larger one, "This is very small, you see. I get so little." Varvara Mikhailovna brought a larger spoon and raised his head, and I gave him a spoonful. "You see how fine—and you haven't spilled it," he said in a fairly firm voice, as if the drink had really made him feel better.

Whenever his smile and expression showed that he was better, we began to believe that he would recover. But as soon as he began moaning and complaining again, we would lose heart and think again that all was lost. And so it went on during those days.

All morning, father moaned loudly. A painful heartburn was added to all his sufferings. At seven, we took his temperature again. It was 102.6° . Father looked at the thermometer himself and said, "No, this isn't good; it has increased."

In the first days of his illness, he often took his temperature on his own initiative and looked at the figures himself, asking us to give him light if the room was dark.

"How do you diagnose this?" he asked Dushan Petrovich. "What is this sickness?"

"I think it's a catarrh of the lungs," said Dushan Petrovich.

"And does that usually cause such a temperature?"

"Yes."

But it was perfectly plain to us all that it was not catarrh but catarhal pneumonia.

At nine o'clock, Vladimir Grigorievich Chertkov arrived with Sergeyenko. Chertkov's meeting with father after several months' separation was very touching. Both wept. I could not restrain my tears when looking at them, and went into the next room to weep. It clearly gave father great joy to see Chertkov. Gathering his remaining strength, he asked him many questions about Sofia Andreyevna, what she was doing, what Vladimir Grigorievich had heard about her; he also asked about the health of Chertkov's wife and his mother.

Father's condition grew more critical all the time. He repeatedly coughed up rusty bloody matter, and his fever was rising. At eleven o'clock in the morning it was 103:3°; his heart worked feebly and unevenly. We gave him champagne, which he took very unwillingly, believing that it would cause heartburn. Yet, in spite of the high fever, father was not depressed on that day—perhaps because of the great pleasure he felt in seeing Vladimir Grigorievich Chertkov. He even joked. He remembered how comically Dushan Petrovich pronounced in Russian the words "powders" and "please leave me alone," always placing the accent on the wrong syllable. At that father laughed so good naturedly that we could not help smiling in spite of our anxiety and gloom.

About three o'clock, his temperature began to go down a little, but he continued to moan, complaining of a pain in one side. I asked him if he felt bad. Thinking that I meant not physical but moral suffering, father replied: "Of course I feel bad—still not having a natural life."

All that day, the thought of having summoned brother Sergei and Doctor Nikitin against father's will tormented me. And I came to the decision—encouraged by what seemed to me an improvement in father's condition—to send Seriozha a telegram saying that he should not come. Since I did not know where my brother was, I telegraphed through Anna Konstantinovna Chertkova: "Father asks you not to come, letter follows, no immediate danger, if there is, will advise." At the same time, I sent off father's letters to Seriozha and Tania.

Regular nursing care was now organized. One or two of us were constantly on duty in the sick room, keeping watch over father's pulse, giving him wine and medicine to strengthen his heart; and at first, at father's wish, we took his temperature often. We all secured soft slippers so as not to irritate the patient. We fully understood that the situation was very, very serious and did what we could to ease his pain and help his system fight the disease. We were all worn out by

sleepless nights and worry, the like of which we had never known before.

About three o'clock, Ivan Ivanovich Ozolin came in. He looked upset and worried. He told us that a telegram had been received from the Shchokino station advising him that a special train scheduled to reach Astapovo about nine o'clock in the evening had left. In that train mother and the whole family were coming from Yasnaia Poliana.

It was plain to all of us that a meeting between father and mother might be fatal to him. We were in consternation. What were we to do? It was decided to ask Dushan Petrovich to speak with my brothers and with mother and persuade them not to enter father's sick room. I, at any rate, had no doubt that since father himself of his free will had severed relations with mother and left her, no one had the right to violate his will. I resolved that I would not let mother in unless father himself expressed his wish for it, even if the doctors and the family should find it possible to admit her.

During the day, father took his temperature several times and looked at the thermometer. To my question whether the pain in his side continued he said "No." After three o'clock, his condition grew worse. He moaned loudly, his breath was accelerated and difficult. Varvara Mikhailovna asked him if he felt bad.

"Yes, bad."

"Hot?"

"Yes, hot."

He again asked for the thermometer and when Varvara Mikhailovna, having put it in place, said aloud, "Five minutes to four," father immediately added. "That means we must take it out at ten minutes after four." I was not in the room when he took out the thermometer. Seeing that it read 102.6°, he said in a loud voice: "Well, it's checkmate, if you don't mind." And when Varvara Mikhailovna did not understand, he repeated, "Well, it's checkmate, if you don't mind."

At eight o'clock, brother Sergei arrived. He was greatly upset, was determined to see father, yet understood that the meeting would disturb and excite him. For a long time we hesitated; Sergei stood and looked at father from the adjoining room, then said resolutely:

"No, I shall go in. I shall tell him that I learned his whereabouts by accident from a conductor at Gorbachevo and came."

Father became greatly excited when he saw Sergei, wanted to know all the details of how he found him, and all that Sergei knew about

mother: where she was and with whom. Sergei said that he came from Moscow, that mother was at Yasnaia Poliana with a doctor, a nurse, and the younger brothers. "I can see now that mother should not be permitted to come in," said my brother as he left the room. "This excites him too much."

Father called me. "What do you say about Seriozha!"

"What, papa?"

"The way he found me! I am very glad to have him—I like his presence—he kissed my hand—" father spoke with difficulty, between sobs.

That evening the zemstvo physician, Semenovsky, whom we had summoned from Dankovo, arrived. Together with Dushan Petrovich and the railway doctor, he examined father and likewise diagnosed pneumonia. Father good-naturedly permitted the physicians to auscultate his chest, and, when they were through, asked Doctor Semenovsky if it would be possible to leave in another two days. Semenovsky replied that it would hardly be possible for father to leave in two weeks. Father was very much distressed by this, said nothing, and turned his face to the wall.

At nine o'clock the special train arrived. Dushan Petrovich went out to meet the family. As usual, people ran concernedly about the platform; and, in a few minutes, I saw mother's figure through the window. She walked supported by one of my brothers. She was asking to be shown the house in which father was staying. When Dushan Petrovich came back, he told us that the family agreed that mother should not enter father's sick room, believing that the excitement might be fatal to his life.

On the morning of the 3d, Doctor Nikitin arrived. No sooner did father see him than he asked who had called him. Nikitin said it was I. Evidently his coming was a disappointment to father, who realized that his retreat was gradually becoming known. But all of us were glad to have Nikitin. And, in general, we were in a cheerful mood and full of hope this morning. Father's temperature had gone down to 98.2° , though his heart worked poorly and his pulse was about a hundred and frequently uneven. Father willingly permitted Nikitin to examine him, and Nikitin, like the others, diagnosed pneumonia in the lower lobe of the left lung. To all our questions, he replied that, although father's condition was very grave, there was still hope.

Several times during the day, my brothers came to inquire about his health. Sometimes they entered the house quietly, sometimes they only knocked at the window. I opened the window and told them of

the state of things. All my brothers tried to take turns staying with mother, to watch over her and to persuade her not to go into father's room. There was a psychiatrist with her at first, and also a nurse.

Correspondents from all parts of Russia crowded the station. They waylaid everyone who left the house to find out the latest news. It was said that mother talked with them quite willingly, which resulted in many papers printing information that was not exactly true.

At Tania's insistent request, I went into the coach of the special train where mother was staying. She wanted to speak with me. I saw no repentance in her; on the contrary, only a desire to condemn everybody. She talked of the sympathy which the newspapers expressed for her, of Chertkov's guilt, of my guilt. She asked questions about our journey and assured me that it was impossible for us to hide in any case because she had two secret friends who informed her of the whereabouts of Lev Nikolayevich; and, moreover, that Stolypin was now commissioning two police agents to watch father unremittingly. She did not realize how low father's condition was, and said that when he got better she would certainly not allow him to escape but would watch his every step. "Wherever he goes, I will go," she kept repeating.

Before our conversation was concluded, she asked whether father had remembered her. I replied that he had, but that he had been very much afraid and was still afraid of her coming.

"He must have spoken of me with hate?"

"No, it was without any hate, rather with pity."

"Does he know that I tried to drown myself?"

"Yes, he does."

"Well—and what then?"

"He said if you had taken your life it would have been a great sorrow to him, but that he would not accuse himself because he could not have acted otherwise than he did."

Then mother began to say that father had left because he wanted to live a simple life, and yet he again surrounded himself with doctors and luxuries. "I had to come flying here in a special train which cost five hundred rubles!" And she began to speak so ill of father that I interrupted her sharply and left.

Mother asked Dushan Petrovich to put under father's head a little pillow which she had brought. She had made it for him herself, and at home he always rested on it. It did not occur to Dushan Petrovich that this could disturb father, but father instantly asked, "Where did this come from?" Dushan Petrovich was caught unawares, and not

knowing what to say, replied, "Tatiana Lvovna has brought it." When he thus learned that sister was at Astapovo, father was excited and glad. He called Vladimir Grigorievich and asked him how it happened that Tania had come.

"Probably Tania told Sofia Andreyevna that she was going back to Kochety and then came here," he said.

Father was constantly worried lest his whereabouts become generally known. It never dawned on him that all the papers had long since printed detailed accounts of his illness at Astapovo and that the station was full of reporters.

Tania came in. He met her joyously and at once began asking about mother. Tania answered his questions, but when he asked whether it was probable that Sofia Andreyevna might come, she wanted to change the subject and said she did not want to speak with him about mother, as the subject affected him too much. He begged her with tears in his eyes, "Why don't you want to answer my question? Don't you understand how much I need it—how much I need to know it for my soul's sake?" Sister lost her wits, said something, and hurriedly left the room. Father could not quiet down for a long time, unable to understand why Tania did not want to answer him.

At four o'clock, when he learned that Gorbunov and Goldenweiser had come, he wished to see them. Dushan Petrovich tried to dissuade him, saying that it would tire him, but father insistently asked for them, saying, "When they see that I am tired they will leave of their own accord." I was not present at their interview. Later, someone told me that Ivan Ivanovich Gorbunov spoke with father about the little books of *The Way of Life*, which he published through the Posrednik, and when he was leaving he said, "Well, Lev Nikolayevich, we'll show some fight yet, won't we?"

"You will, but I won't any more," father replied.

At five o'clock, father asked for Seriozha. Seriozha was not at hand. Then he asked for Chertkov. Chertkov and Nikitin came in, and father began to dictate to them a telegram to the younger brothers who, he thought, were with mother at Yasnaia Poliana: "My condition is better, but my heart is so weak that meeting mother would be fatal to me."

"You understand," he said to Vladimir Grigorievich, "if she wants to see me, I shall be unable to refuse her, and yet meeting her would be fatal to me," he repeated, tears rolling from his eyes.

After half an hour, he called Varvara Mikhailovna and asked her

whether the telegram was sent and who had paid for it. Varvara Mikhailovna said that probably it was Sasha.

"Surely, that's right. Why should Vladimir Grigorievich incur expenses for my sake? I have my own money. Take the purse in the little table drawer; there are about ten rubles in small change in it, and then about fifty rubles in the notebook; you can spend those. Give them to Sasha."

All through father's illness, it amazed me that, in spite of fever, a great weakening of his heart, and intense pains, he continued to have a wonderfully clear consciousness. He noticed all that was happening around him to the smallest detail. For instance, when all left his room, he began to count how many people had come to him at Astapovo. One time, he asked the girl who wiped the floor in his room whether she was married, how old she was, and whether her life there was satisfactory. She answered him with embarrassment. He never forgot to wind his watch. Once he took it from the table and wanted to wind it. The cord, which was wound around the screw, interfered. Varvara Mikhailovna, who was in the room, asked him if he wished her to take off the cord. "Yes, take it off, my hands are weak, I cannot undo it." And then he wound the watch.

In the daytime, Chertkov read newspapers to him and also read four letters which had come for him at Yasnaia Poliana. Father listened to the letters attentively, and asked me to note on the envelopes what was to be done about each letter, as he usually did himself.

In the evening, his temperature was 99.9°. Father no longer asked to have his temperature taken, although he did not object when we did it. Violent hiccoughs began to trouble him. We gave him sugar water to drink, and soda water with milk, but nothing helped. He hiccupped loudly, and it evidently caused him pain. His heart weakened again and his general condition became worse. Our spirits drooped, but Nikitin and Dushan Petrovich still continued to hope. On that day, Ozolin's family moved into the small room in the watchman's house, leaving the whole apartment to us. Ivan Ivanovich himself stayed with us.

The night of November 3 was one of the hardest. In the evening, everything was quiet. Father's brain was clear. I remember that that evening, when someone straightened his bed, he said: "And the peasants, the peasants—how they die!" and he cried.

About eleven o'clock, he began to talk deliriously. He asked us to write down his words, but we could not do so as he spoke in scattered,

incomprehensible phrases. When he asked us to read back what he had said, we lost our heads and did not know what to read; and still he begged, "Read, read then!" We tried to write down his disrupted talk and read it back to him, but he felt that there was no sense in what we had written and it did not satisfy him; and yet he asked us again to read it. Not knowing what to do, I awakened Vladimir Grigorievich. When father made the same request of him, I suggested to Vladimir Grigorievich that he might read out of the *Cycle of Reading*. It helped. Father quieted down. Nearly all through that night, we took turns reading the *Cycle of Reading*, and father stopped talking and listened. Sometimes he would stop the reader and ask to have some of the words that he had not caught repeated, and sometimes he asked whose thought was the one just read.

The morning that followed was also an anxious one. Father kept saying something none of us could understand, moaned loudly, sighed, begged us to understand his thought, to help him. And it seemed to me that we failed to understand not because his thought had not meaning—I read in his face that it had a deep and important sense for him—but only because he was no longer able to put thoughts into words.

There were moments when he spoke steadily and clearly. He said to Vladimir Grigorievich, "It seems that I am dying; but perhaps not." Then he said something that we could not understand and added: "However, I must try just a little more."

In the daytime we aired the sick room and carried father into another one. As he was being carried back, he looked at the glass door which faced his bed and asked Varvara Mikhailovna, "Where does this glass door open?"

"Into the corridor."

"And what is at the end of the corridor?"

"The anteroom and the front steps."

At that moment, I came into the room.

"And is this door locked?" father asked. I said that it was.

"Strange—I saw clearly two women's faces looking at me through that door."

We told him this was impossible as the door from the corridor to the anteroom was also locked. But we could see that he was not reassured and continued to look apprehensively at the glass door. Varvara Mikhailovna and I took a steamer rug and hung it over the door. "Ah, that is good now," he said with relief, turned to the wall, and was quiet for a while.

A new, bad sign appeared. Father unceasingly fingered the edge of his blanket. He would take one corner and finger the edge all the way to the other corner, then go back, never stopping. This alarmed me terribly. I remembered Masha. At times, father lay quite motionless, silent, with not even a moan, and gazed before him. There was something new, something far away in this gaze. "The end!"—the thought went through my mind. At other times, he tried to express some thought that obsessed him. He tried to speak, felt that he was not saying the right thing, groaned and sighed.

"Don't think," I said to him.

"Ah, how can I stop thinking? I must, I must think." And again he tried to say something, tossed in bed, and suffered.

Worn out, he finally fell asleep. He awoke about three o'clock, somewhat calmed, and asked for a drink. Varvara Mikhailovna brought him tea with lemon. When she left the room he turned to me and said, "What a good nurse Varichka is—only women can take care of one like this!"

I suggested washing up. He consented. I took some warm water, added a little eau de Cologne and, with a piece of cotton, began to wash his face. He smiled and closed his eyes tightly, his face calm. When I finished one side of his face, he turned the other to me and said in a kindly voice, "Now the other and don't forget to wash the ears." He spent several quiet hours. Again we cheered up and began to hope.

Since it was necessary to have a physician at his bedside constantly, and Semenovsky could not come every time, and Dushan Petrovich was worn out with worry and sleepless nights, I suggested to Nikitin that Doctor Grigori Moiseyevich Berkenheim be summoned. He consented.

Toward night, delirium began again and father begged and implored us to catch his thought, to help him.

"Sasha, find out what the end of this will be," he said to me.

I tried to take his mind off it. "Are you thirsty?"

"Ah, no, no! Can't you understand? It's so simple."

And again he begged, "Come here, come nearer, what are you afraid of? You don't want to help me; I am asking every one of you—" But strain as I might, I could not guess what he wanted to say. He continued saying something unintelligible. "To seek, always to seek—"

Varvara Mikhailovna entered the room. Father raised himself, stretched out his arms, and in a loud, joyous voice, looking straight at

her, cried, "Masha, Masha!" Varvara Mikhailovna ran out, frightened and overwhelmed.

All night I never left his bedside. He tossed around and groaned. Again he asked me to write down his words. I took pencil and paper, but there was nothing to write down, and yet he asked me to read it back. "Read to me what I have said. Now, why don't you read? What did I write?" he repeated with growing excitement.

We had tried to arrange it so that two persons should be on duty all the time, but at this moment it so happened that I was alone at father's bedside. He seemed to be slumbering. Suddenly, with a vigorous movement, he raised himself on his pillows and wanted to put his feet on the floor. I went to him.

"What do you wish, papa?"

"Let me go; let me go!" and he made another motion as if to leave the bed. I knew that if he should get up I would be unable to support him, and he would fall down. I tried in every way to calm him, but he wrestled with me with all his might. "Let me go; how dare you hold me! Let me go!" Seeing that I could not subdue him, that my arguing and pleading were in vain, and my strength insufficient to hold him, I lost courage and began to shout, "Doctor, doctor, come quickly!" I believe Doctor Semenovsky was on duty that time. He came in with Varvara Mikhailovna, and we succeeded in calming father. It was clear that he suffered greatly; and I suffered with him, but could not help him.

I awakened Vladimir Grigorievich, who began to read aloud from the *Cycle of Reading*, as on the night before. Father became silent, only moaning and hiccoughing at rare intervals. In the morning, he said in a feeble voice, "I am very tired, but the principal thing is, you torment me."

Varvara Mikhailovna asked him if he wanted a drink of water. He hiccoughed a great deal just then. "It's of no avail," he said to her kindly, "but if you wish, all right." He took the small glass from her hands, drank, but then spilled it. "Ah—ah—ah—" he moaned, "everything went the wrong way."

On the 5th, Berkenheim came from Moscow and brought a new bed, as we had requested him in our telegram. The one on which father lay was very old, with ruined springs that stuck out. Nikitin asked father to change to the new bed, but he refused. In general, during the last days, he did the doctors' bidding unwillingly. Not only did he no longer ask to have his temperature taken but con-

sented to it reluctantly. He wanted complete peace and objected to being disturbed.

In a little while, however, he consented to be moved to the new bed, saying in a benignant voice to Nikitin, "All right, carry me over, if that gives you pleasure."

Berkenheim was in the room when the new bed was being arranged. Father watched the proceedings and suddenly asked, "Who did not say good morning to me?" When told that everyone had, he replied, "No, somebody did not." Then Grigori Moiseyevich, who previously had not wished to disturb father, came up to him. Father said tenderly, "Thank you, dear fellow." Berkenheim kissed father's hand, sobbed, and left the room.

Although Berkenheim expressed less hope for a happy outcome than did Nikitin or the other physicians, he exerted himself more than anyone else. He demanded that all the remaining pictures and the upholstered furniture be carried out of the room. He brought fermented milk from Moscow; father asked for some and drank half a glass. He also told me to boil some oatmeal, which I mixed with egg yolk as father always did at home; we were all greatly comforted when father ate a little.

While we were engrossed in taking care of father, following his slightest ups and downs, now losing heart, now cheering up again, reporters milled around the walls of the house, catching every word. The telegraphers could not dispatch all the messages; there were so many that urgent telegrams went as ordinary ones. Every minute camera men were taking photographs of persons and places: my mother, brothers, our little house, the station. An old monk, Father Varsonofi, asked all the family to let him in to see father in order "to restore him, before his death, to the fold of the Orthodox Church."

I heard of all this only from the conversations of those around me, but one time I nearly got into a movie film. Goldenweiser, who stood watch in the anteroom, called me saying that mother was on the steps and asked me to come out for a minute so that she could inquire about father's condition. I stepped out and began to answer her questions, but she asked me to let her into the anteroom, swearing that she would not enter the rooms. I was on the point of opening the door when I heard a buzz and, turning around, saw two photographers grinding away. I waved my hands and shouted to them to stop photographing and then turned to mother and asked her to leave at once.

"You are keeping me from him," she replied to my reproaches, "then at least let people believe that I have been with him!"

It was with a heavy heart that I came back to our little house.

Meanwhile, Dushan Petrovich was writing the following to my aunt Maria Nikolayevna at Shamordino:

Yesterday S. A. [Sofia Andreyevna] told me that from now on she will never release Lev Nikolayevich for a minute. If Lev Nikolayevich regains his health, which Sofia Andreyevna scarcely doubts, and if he leaves for the south or goes abroad, she will follow him and will not hesitate to pay 5,000 rubles to a detective who will watch him wherever he goes. This I am telling you not to condemn Sofia Andreyevna but just as a characteristic thing.

Yesterday and today, five reporters who went into her railway coach wrote down her conversation. . . . The general sense of what Sofia Andreyevna told them was that Lev Nikolayevich had left home for the sake of advertising himself.

Tania and I sat near father. He hiccupped continuously. Tania asked me if we should not give him something to drink.

"How this hiccupping must torment him," she added.

"No, it isn't at all tormenting," he replied.

In the daytime, we sat in the dining-room all the time. Tania and Doctor Semenovsky were at father's side. My sister believed that in his delirium father had pronounced the word, "Sonia," or "soda"; she was not sure which, and she asked him again; "Do you want to see Sonia?" Father answered nothing and turned his face to the wall.

While the doctors were putting on his compresses, brother Sergei remarked that he believed the compress was not in the right place.

Father asked, "What, it's bad, is it?"

"It isn't bad—the compress is badly placed," said Sergei.

"Ah, yes."

Father's condition took a sharp turn for the worse on the 5th. We all understood that there was almost no hope. And I thought also that the treatment—all those hypodermics, enemas, the oxygen—were useless and only disturbed his peace and that inner labor which entirely absorbed him in his preparations for death.

In the evening, father dozed off quietly. When he awakened, I offered to wash him. He said, "Yes—perhaps, wash me." As I sponged his moustache and beard, he tried to catch the cotton with his lips and take it into his mouth. Probably his mouth felt very dry. When I finished, I asked him to eat a little. He refused at first, then consented and ate half a glass of oatmeal and drank some almond milk.

The night of November 5 passed comparatively quietly. Toward morning, his temperature was 99.1°; his heart was weak but better than on the day before. All the physicians save Berkenheim, who from the beginning considered the illness as fatal, cheered up and to our questions said that although the condition continued serious, there was still hope.

At ten o'clock, the physicians Shchurovsky and Usov, whom the family had summoned, arrived from Moscow. When father saw them he said: "I remember them." And then, after a short silence, added in an affectionate tone, "They are dear people." While these physicians were examining father, he, evidently mistaking Usov for Dushan Petrovich, embraced and kissed him but observed his mistake and said, "No, not he, not he."

Shchurovsky found his condition almost hopeless. But I knew it without that; although all the others had been optimistic that morning, I had hardly any hope left. All my physical and spiritual strength left me. I was just barely able to compel myself to do the necessary things and could no longer control the sobs that rose in my throat. Everything that followed is blurred in my memory in one continuous pain. I have been able to note certain details, thanks to the notes of Varvara Mikhailovna Feokritova and Alexei Petrovich Sergeyenko, who wrote down the events and father's words.

On the 6th, it seemed as though father were taking leave of us all. The doctors busied themselves around him. He looked lovingly at Dushan Petrovich and said with deep tenderness, "Dear Dushan, dear Dushan!"

While the sheets were being changed, I supported father's back; and, presently, I felt his hand fumbling for mine. I thought that he wanted to lean against me, but he pressed my hand strongly—once—then again. I held his hand in mine and pressed my lips to it, trying to contain my sobs.

Father said something to Tania and me that day that forced me out of the despair into which I had sunk—forced me to remember that life was given us for some purpose and that it is our duty to carry it on, in any circumstances, to the best of our small strength, endeavoring to serve the One who sent us and mankind. The bed stood in the middle of the room. Tania and I sat near it. Suddenly father raised himself with a vigorous movement and almost sat up. I went to him. "Shall I fix the pillows?"

"No," he said, scanning every word firmly and clearly. "No. I only advise you to remember that there are many people in the world be-

sides Lev Tolstoy and you are looking only upon Lev." And he sank back on his pillows.

His condition became worse at once. The activity of the heart declined sharply, the pulse could scarcely be felt at all, his lips, nose, and hands became bluish, and his face became suddenly thin as if it had contracted. The breathing was hardly perceptible. All thought that the end had come.

But the physicians refused to abandon hope. They gave injections, oxygen, applied hot water bottles to the limbs, and life began to return. The pulse grew stronger, the breathing deeper. Nikitin was holding the bag with oxygen. Father warded him off. "It is quite useless," he said.

In the evening, someone told me that Father Varsonofi wished to see me. All the family and the doctors had flatly refused his request to be admitted to father, yet he found it necessary to address me. I wrote him the following note:

Forgive me, Father, that I am not fulfilling your request and am not coming out to speak with you. I cannot at present leave my sick father's bedside, as he may need me any minute. I cannot add anything to what you have heard from all of our family.

We—the whole family—have unanimously decided to obey, before all other considerations, the will and the desires of my father, whatever they may be. Next to his wishes, we submit to the directions of the physicians, who find that it would be fatal to his health at the present time to propose anything to him or to force his will.

With sincere esteem for you,

ALEXANDRA TOLSTAIA

November 6, 1910, Astapovo.

To this note, I received from Father Varsonofi the reply which I shall quote here:

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Much esteemed Countess Alexandra Lvovna. I wish you peace and joy from our Lord Jesus Christ.

I respectfully thank Your Excellency for your letter in which you inform me that the will of your parent is considered foremost by yourself and your entire family. But you are aware, Countess, that the Count had expressed to his sister, your aunt—the nun Mother Marie—a desire to see us and speak with us in order to regain the desired peace of soul, and that he sorrowed deeply because this wish had not been fulfilled. In view of this, I respectfully request you, Countess, not to refuse to advise the Count

of my arrival at Astapovo; and, if he desires to see me, if only for two or three minutes, I shall immediately come to him. In case of a negative answer from the Count, however, I shall return to the Optina Monastery, abandoning this matter to the will of God.

Sinner, Igumen Varsonof, your unworthy intercessor before the Lord. The year 1910, November 6, Astapovo.

This letter I did not answer. I could no longer think of these things.

It seemed to us all that father's condition was better, and hope flared up again. We applied a salt enema. Father repeatedly expressed his displeasure every time the physicians bothered him. When Nikitin proposed the enema, saying that it might stop his hiccoughs, he said, "God will arrange everything." Another time he said, "All this is foolishness, trifles. What is this treatment for?"

In the evening, my brothers and the physicians came in. Shchurovsky spoke with Vladimir Grigorievich at length about father's illness and did not despair. He was of the opinion that father still had some strength left. Then everyone went to bed except Berkenhiem and Usov.

I fell asleep. They awakened me at ten o'clock. Father felt worse. He began to suffocate. They raised him on his pillows and so he sat, supported by us, his feet hanging down from the bed. "Hard to breathe," he said hoarsely, with difficulty. All were awakened. The doctors gave him oxygen to breathe and suggested a morphine hypodermic. Father refused. "No, no, not necessary. I don't want it," he said.

After conferring among themselves, the doctors decided to make a camphor injection to increase the activity of the heart. When they were about to put in the needle, father pulled back his arm. He was told that it was not morphine but camphor, and he consented.

After the hypodermic, he seemed to feel better. He called: "Seriozha!" And when Seriozha came, said, "Truth—I have much love . . ." He did not finish the sentence.

These were his last words. But at the moment it seemed to us that the danger had passed. Everyone was comforted and again went to bed, excepting only those on duty who stayed at his bedside.

All those days I had never undressed and hardly slept, and presently I felt so sleepy that I could no longer control myself. I lay down on a divan and was instantly asleep. I was aroused about midnight. Everyone had gathered in the room. Father was worse again. He was moaning and tossing about, his heart scarcely beat at all. The doctors

injected morphine and he fell asleep. He slept until half-past four in the morning, November 7. The doctors were still making injections. He was lying on his back, breathing frequently and hoarsely. His face had a stern, serious, and, as it seemed to me, an alien expression.

Someone said that Sofia Andreyevna should be admitted. I bent over father, he was hardly breathing. For the last time, I kissed his face, his hands. Mother was led in. He was already unconscious. I left his bedside and sat down on the divan. Nearly all those present were subduing their sobs; mother talked, lamented. Someone asked her to keep silent. One last sigh—there was dead stillness in the room. Suddenly Shchurovsky said something in a loud, sharp voice, mother replied, and all began to talk in loud voices.

I understood that he could hear us no longer.

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